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## **THESIS**

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE 1964 JOHNSON LETTER:  
LESSONS FOR THE 2003 IRAQ CRISIS, TURKISH-  
AMERICAN RELATIONS, AND GLOBAL POWER-  
REGIONAL PARTNER INTERACTIONS**

By

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December 2004

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2003 IRAQ CRISIS, TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS, AND GLOBAL  
POWER-REGIONAL PARTNER INTERACTIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The dynamics in U.S.-Turkey relations in both 1964 and 2003 continued to be between a large global power and a medium regional power in the framework of a global threat that required regional cooperation. In both cases the priority of the global power was the fight against the global threat and this created expectations from the medium power ally in the region, who –in both cases- had its own reservations about the issue, considering its own national interests.

The analysis of the 1964 Crisis shows that both U.S. and Turkey would have five main sources of influence over their foreign policy decisions leading to disagreement in 1964: the dynamics in the U.S. Turkish relations as one between a global power and a regional partner; domestic concerns of both countries; unaligned goals of the two parties; the international circumstances; and the influence of signaling failures and previous interactions. When we analyze the 2003 Crisis in light of these findings we see that all the main issues seem to be consistently relevant, though their effects might have changed slightly.

Overall, both cases reveal that the above-mentioned five factors determine the outcome of interactions between large global powers and medium powers in the region.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This thesis deals with a certain aspect of Turkish American relations, which tends to come to surface in unexpected moments and has significant ramifications for both countries as well as their allies. It covers the first major crisis in the relations between U.S. and Turkey – the roots of which date back to the 1947 Truman Doctrine-, with the intention of understanding the last crisis between U.S. and Turkey in 2003 through a more historical and structural analysis. The major focus of the study is to spell out the variables that influenced the foreign policy decisions of both countries, in order to uncover the underlying trouble spots in the Turkish American relations in order to prevent future miscalculations and disagreements. Overall, the purpose of this study is to identify the factors that contributed to disagreement between Turkey and United States in June 1964 over the Cyprus issue resulting in the so-called ‘Johnson letter;’ to identify the policy lessons that could have been helpful in the 2003 Iraq Crisis, when the Turkish Parliament voted against the stationing of U.S. troops on Turkish soil to stage a ground attack on Iraq; to analyze the dynamics in Turkish American relations in order to guide future interactions between the two countries especially in times of regional crisis; and on a broader level : identify policy lessons about how global powers and medium regional powers interact.

Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952. U.S. and Turkey have had strong relations for over five decades. Turkey was a very important ally in the war against communism. It had, and still has, the second largest army in NATO. Its strategic location on the border of the Soviet Union and close to the volatile Middle Eastern region, together with the historical legacy of armed struggle against the Russians, and the Turkish quest for westernization since the beginning of the century made Turkey a natural ally of U.S. Though after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 there aroused some doubts about the value of Turkey as an ally, the emergence of Islamic terrorism as a global threat after 11 September 2001 marked the parallel reemergence of Turkey’s strategic importance as an ally of the West.

Yet, despite the strong motives for collaboration, and the long history of cooperation on a large number of issues, U.S. and Turkey do have their differences that sometimes create disagreement, and because they are most often unexpected, these disagreements tend to create disappointment on the part of one party against the other, and damage the relations, creating question marks about the future prospects of collaboration. It may often take significant time and effort to remove the influence created by these disagreements. The 1964 Johnson letter and the 2003 vote of the Turkish Parliament are two such occasions, when one of the parties adopted policy decisions disadvantageous to the other party. In 1964, Turkey got an unexpected response from U.S. to its quest to unilaterally intervene in Cyprus in order to protect the Turkish Cypriots as well as remove a security threat from the south of its mainland. The U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson sent a very stern letter to the Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, arguing against any such move and threatening to fail to fulfill its obligations as a NATO member in case of a Russian reaction. In 2003, this time U.S. got an unexpected “no” to its request to use Turkish soil for a ground operation into Iraq. Both cases resulted in the deterioration of the relations, and left lasting impacts on the views of the two countries toward each other. In this study, the crisis of 1964 will be analyzed in order to shed light on the 2003 crisis.

Since this is a historical analysis of foreign policy formation in two countries regarding each other, the evolution of the foreign policy decisions in both U.S. and Turkey in 1964, as well as 2003 needed to be analyzed. This was done in two parallel tracks: one was the historical documentation of the developments that took place and the analysis of their effects on the policies of both countries; the other was the examining of internal deliberations among the policy makers before reaching a decision. The first one was well documented in historical books, newspapers, and analytical books written by experts on U.S.-Turkish relations. The second track of the research required a more detailed investigation of the declassified documents and the books that contained this declassified information. The FRUS(Foreign Relations of United States) series, and

Claude Nicolet's study of American policy towards Cyprus<sup>1</sup> contained a good amount of declassified information --mostly from the U.S. national archives-- that were useful in the analysis of the 1964 crisis, while Fikret Bila's report of the 2003 Crisis from the Turkish perspective<sup>2</sup> continues to be the best source available in terms of the declassified documents it contains.

The study has revealed that, in 1964, United States and Turkey were looking at the Cyprus problem from different perspectives. Both countries had domestic and strategic concerns that affected their policies on the issue. But the main factors affecting the American policy were strategic concerns arising from the Cold War, while on the Turkish part domestic pressures had the stronger affect on the decision makers. Other factors that influenced the policy decisions of both countries in 1964 and 2003 would be the international circumstances, the signaling mistakes of both countries, and the effects of earlier interactions which created different expectations in the two countries.

The primary U.S. concerns were: to prevent a war between two NATO allies (Greece and Turkey); to preserve the southern flank of NATO intact; and to 'keep the Soviets out' of Cyprus and the Mediterranean. Thus, U.S. acted to prevent a Turkish intervention which would jeopardize all these goals. The domestic concerns of the U.S. government, which included the looming presidential elections in November 1964 and the presence of a sizable Greek-American electorate also influenced the U.S. policy makers.

Turkish government, on the other hand, was under intense domestic pressure to stop the killing of the Turkish-Cypriots. Turkey also worried about the island falling under hostile domination, which would jeopardize its security in the south. Thus, despite İnönü's cautious personality and the lack of readiness in the armed forces for the operation, strong public opinion and the pressure from the willingness of the military for an operation persuaded İnönü to mount a military intervention. But, aware of the risks

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<sup>1</sup> Claude Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention, (Mannheim and Mohnesee : Bibliopolis, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Fikret Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara'da Irak Savaşları (Ankara: Unit Yayıncılık, 2003)

involved in the operation (a possible war with Greece and a possible Soviet reaction) he decided to inform the United States to secure its support against those potentially dangerous consequences.

The Johnson letter to İnönü was a surprise for Turkey, because it not only prevented a military intervention of Turkey into Cyprus, but it also brought into question the security guarantees that Turkey had thought it had acquired by joining NATO in 1952. It could be understandable that U.S. would like to prevent Turkish military action, but the unexpectedly harsh tone of the letter, and the reference to withdraw from alliance responsibilities created a sense of betrayal and disappointment in Turkey towards U.S. It created a lasting affect on the Turkish-American relations and has not been forgotten by the Turkish public since. From than on, any crisis between the two countries has been compared to the Johnson letter to gauge the level of the crisis.

Although the main focus of this thesis is the developments after the December 1963 Constitutional Crisis in Cyprus and the subsequent developments until June 1964 that led to the Johnson letter, the period before 1963 is examined in Chapter II – in terms of the historical context of U.S.-Turkey relations, the Cyprus Conflict, and the U.S. policy over Cyprus- in order to be able to understand the historical dynamics in U.S.-Turkish relations, the previous history of the Cyprus dispute, and the previous U.S. policy over Cyprus. This will provide a historical background of all the aspects of the 1964 Crisis, and facilitate our analysis by enabling us to compare and contrast in the following chapter.

In Chapter III, we analyze the Constitutional Crisis of December 1963 and the subsequent developments both on the island and in the international context that led to the Turkish threats of intervention the last of which would be prevented from actually taking place by the Johnson letter of June 1964. By analyzing the Cyprus crisis all along from its emergence in mid-1950s up to the Johnson letter in June 1964, we will be able to examine the American and Turkish reactions to events in a broader context under different international and domestic circumstances. This will provide an opportunity to identify the effects of different domestic and international circumstances over the decision makers both in Washington and Ankara.



The conclusion chapter of the thesis, Chapter IV, is arranged in three different sections: in the first section, the factors that are identified as effecting the foreign policy decisions both in U.S. and Turkey leading to disagreement in June 1964 are identified and explained clearly. In the second section, the key events of the 2003 crisis starting from the first requests of U.S. from Turkey up until the March 2003 vote of the Turkish parliament are recounted briefly, underlining the basic positions of both countries, especially the Turkish officials, regarding the implications of U.S. requests. Finally, in the last section, the 2003 crisis is analyzed through the lessons of 1964.

The analysis of the 1964 Crisis shows that both U.S. and Turkey would have five main sources of influence over their foreign policy decisions leading to disagreement in 1964: the dynamics in the U.S. Turkish relations; domestic concerns of both countries; the presence of unaligned goals regarding the same issue; the international circumstances; and the influence of signaling failures and previous interactions. When we analyze the 2003 Crisis in light of these findings we see that all the main issues seem to be consistently relevant, though their effects might have changed slightly.

The dynamics in U.S.-Turkey relations in both 1964 and 2003 continued to be one between a global power and a medium power in the framework of a global threat that required regional cooperation. In 1964 the global threat was communism. In 2003 it was Islamic terrorism. In both cases the priority of the global power was the fight against the global threat and this created expectations from the medium power ally in the region, who –in both cases- had its own reservations about the issue, considering its own national interests. This created unaligned goals in Turkey and U.S., making it harder to cooperate. In both cases, though the crisis erupted over foreign policy issues, the roots of disagreement were affected by domestic considerations, as well. In 1964, the looming presidential elections and the presence of a sizable Greek-American community influenced the U.S. policy makers, while, at the same time, the strong sensitivity of the Turkish public forced the Turkish government to take a tougher stance over Cyprus. In 2003, U.S. did not have any domestic concerns regarding the issue, but the newly elected Turkish government was under intense pressure from the public which was overwhelmingly against a U.S. invasion in Iraq. In both 1964 and 2003, the international

circumstances played a significant role. In 1964, the overall support of the international community to the Greek Cypriots made it easier for U.S. to follow a policy against Turkish desires, while the lack of international support, and the lack of legal justification -- which was required by the Turkish Constitution for Turkey to accept U.S. demands-- for a U.S. invasion in 2003, made it harder for Turkish officials to jump on the same wagon.

Both U.S. and Turkey suffered from signaling failures, and the different effects of earlier interactions in 1964 as well as in 2003. In 1964, the previous Turkish threats of intervention and the resulting compromises from U.S. were interpreted differently by Turkey and U.S. Some Turkish officials over exaggerated the gains from these threats so much as to resort to these threats as a policy tool, and when they recognized that their effect had decreased, they felt it necessary to actually do something in order bring a change in the deteriorating situation. But, when Turkey had actually decided to follow through its words, U.S. had concluded that this was merely a bluff to extract some concessions. In 2003, the different interpretation of the historical memory of strong cooperation between U.S. and Turkey during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War caused different expectations and considerations. U.S. remembered the strong and willing cooperation from Turkey in 1991 and expected even more cooperation in 2003. Turkey, on the other hand, remembered 1991 as an instance when it ended up paying a high prize for cooperating with the U.S., together with the unfulfilled promises of the U.S. officials.

Overall, both cases emphasize the five significant factors that determine how large global and medium regional powers interact: the dynamics in the relations between the two countries; the presence of unaligned goals; domestic concerns of both countries; the international circumstances of the time; and the effects of earlier interactions and signaling.

## **II. U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS, THE CYPRUS CRISIS AND THE U.S. CYPRUS POLICY BEFORE DECEMBER 1963**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Johnson letter of June 1964 has three aspects that are important: The Turkish American relations, the Cyprus dispute, and the U.S. policy over Cyprus. Therefore, in order to understand the events of June 1964, and the way both U.S. and Turkey behaved the way they did, we need to examine these three aspects respectively before delving into the immediate events surrounding the Johnson letter.

First, the Johnson letter is an issue that has greatly changed some aspects of Turkish American relations. Therefore, before going into the details of the 1963 crisis in Cyprus and the eventual Johnson letter of June 1964, it is important, for a number of reasons, to examine the main events in the history of the alliance up to then. This will provide the opportunity to identify the motives of the two countries in forming closer relations, and point out the basic characteristics of the relations, (i.e., is it military, political, economic, or all these ?). It will be helpful in analyzing the dynamics in the Turkish American relationship, the expectations of both countries from the other (especially Turkey's expectations from U.S.) in 1964, and, more specifically, the reason for disappointment on the Turkish side. We will examine cases of conflicting interests before 1963, the way they reacted to these situations, and the effects of those previous cases on the view of the two countries against the other. Touching the main points in the relations up to the 1963 crisis, we will be able to put the events in 1964 in a broader historical context, helping us to see the picture more clearly.

Second, the Johnson letter is inextricably linked to the Cyprus dispute, and concerned the parties in the conflict, both on the island (Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots) and outside of it (Greece, Turkey, and Britain). The Turkish decision to intervene in the island, which prompted the Johnson letter, was a reaction to the events on the island. Therefore we need to talk generally about the way the Cyprus conflict emerged and evolved over the years until 1963, when the major crisis that lead to the

Johnson letter commenced. Knowing the events in Cyprus will enable us determine how they affected U.S. and Turkey , and understand especially why Turkey acted the way it did, as well as what historical memory would justify Turkish intervention in 1964 and how external parties got involved in the issue.

Third, the Johnson letter is also an embodiment of U.S. policy towards Cyprus. It greatly affected the form of the resolution of the problem at that moment. By sending the letter to Turkey, U.S. showed clearly to the parties that it had a Cyprus policy, and would not let the resolution of the problem against its terms. That brings us the question of what that policy was. But, another aspect of this issue is; whether that policy was new, or it had evolved in time in response to the events. To understand that, we need to know what U.S. policy towards Cyprus was in the 1950s up until the 1963 crisis. We will examine where U.S. stood pertaining the eventual solution to the problem, what its priorities were, and how they played out. Therefore, when we examine the U.S. policy of Cyprus in 1964, we will be able to identify a change if there is one, and query the reasons of that change. The Cyprus conflict initially developed as a problem between Britain, Greek Cypriots and Greece before it turned into a Greek-Turkish dispute. Since U.S. policy in 1960s would be based on neutrality between two NATO allies (Greece and Turkey), it is important to examine what U.S. position was when the dispute involved two different NATO allies, i.e. Greece and Britain instead of Greece and Turkey. This will help us see whether U.S. position would change once the countries concerned were different.

Fourth, as we examine the U.S. policy over Cyprus and its repercussions to the Turkish American relations, we will be looking for lessons that could be applicable in 2003 during the Iraq crisis in terms of determining potential disagreement points and basing the expectations of both countries from the other on a more reasonable level. We will be looking for reasons for disagreement between U.S. and Turkey that were relevant both in 1964 and 2003, and underline those that could have guided the policy makers of both countries to reach a more realistic understanding of the Turkish American relations together with potential trouble spots and possible remedies to prevent them from harming the relations in 2003.

## B. TURKISH AMERICAN RELATIONS BEFORE 1963

Since the Johnson letter contained expressions questioning the U.S. readiness to help Turkey against a Soviet intervention, it is important to point out the fact that, the primary reason that pushed Turkey out of neutralist stance during WWII into the Western camp was the threat from the Soviets, who had been the traditional enemies of the Ottoman State for centuries. In addition to the century old Turkish quest for becoming a member of the Western family, Turkey was in a way “forced into the Western camp because of the Soviet threat”<sup>3</sup> or as Khrushchev put it: the Soviet demands “succeeded in frightening the Turks right into the open arms of the Americans”.<sup>4</sup> On March 1945, the Soviets officially denounced the 1925 Treaty of Friendship with Turkey. This was followed by another demand on June 7 1945, asking for a base on the straits and some territorial concessions in the eastern part of Turkey. Despite initial lack of U.S. response against these threats, considering the Soviet actions in Iran<sup>5</sup> and with the effect of the Turkish campaign emphasizing the importance of Turkey’s geographical position as the key to Middle East,<sup>6</sup> U.S. concluded that it was vital to prevent the Soviet Union from obtaining control over Turkey.<sup>7</sup> The Truman administration was convinced that the Soviets intended to attack Turkey “unless they were faced with an iron fist and strong language”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, United States adopted a harsh stance against the Soviet demands, which eventually caused the Soviets to back down.

Thus, the arrival of U.S.S Missouri in İstanbul on April 1946, which marked the beginning of a stronger relationship between the two countries, was a much celebrated event in Turkey. The ship was merely bearing the remains of the late Turkish

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<sup>3</sup> William Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000(London, Frank Cass, 2002), 110

<sup>4</sup> Bruce R. Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII* in Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation(ed.), Turkey Between East and West: New Challenges for a Rising regional Power (Westview Press, 1996), 45

<sup>5</sup> Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000, 111

<sup>6</sup> George S. Harris, Troubled Alliance : Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971 (Washington, D.C. : American Enterprise For Public Policy Research, 1972), 18

<sup>7</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 46

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in : Harris, Troubled Alliance, 19 from Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, vol.1 :Years of Decisions (Garden City, N.Y.), .522

Ambassador to the United States, Mehmet Munir Ertegun, who had died in Washington in 1944. But the signal being sent to the U.S.S.R. and the Turkish public was clear.

Together with the decline of Britain as a world power, U.S. replaced its role in Turkey and Greece as a supporter of these two countries. Since the end of the World War II, Britain was providing support to the Greek and Turkish governments but it was not effective in this support against the U.S.S.R. There was a danger of the Greek government being replaced by a pro-Soviet one, and the Soviets were pressuring Turkey for territorial concessions. Britain, unable to fulfill its role, announced its withdrawal of aid to Turkey and Greece asking U.S. to fill in. U.S., on the other hand, had begun to return to the policy of isolation after the end of World War II. There was a near-consensus in the American public as well as the Congress for withdrawal to the continent. Yet, the events up to 1947- the Soviet threats against Iran and Turkey, and their support for the communists in Greece- persuaded the American administration that the Soviet Union was undertaking expansionist policies in the Near and Middle East.

Thus, on 12 March, 1947 Truman made a speech announcing a new American policy to "... support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures [...]."<sup>9</sup> In the end, it amounted to \$400 million aid to Greece and Turkey, (\$300 million to Greece and \$100 million to Turkey).

The Truman Doctrine is very important for a number of reasons: First, it was aimed at strengthening Turkey and Greece against the common enemy, the Soviets, or 'communism' as another way to put it. Second, it was a support to the would-be conflicting parties in the Cyprus conflict, Turkey and Greece. Third, it was a turning point in Turkish American relations, as well as American foreign policy. Turkey was, for the first time, receiving aid from U.S. and the Turks now felt that they were "no more isolated".<sup>10</sup> It "signified the formal emergence of the United States as Turkey's chief supporter in the West" and associated Turkey formally with the U.S., conveying new

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<sup>9</sup> George Kousoulas, The Success of the Truman Doctrine Was not Accidental, *Military Affairs*, 29, no. 2(Summer, 1965), 88 originally from: Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: 1946-1952, Years of Trial and Hope, vol 2, A Signet Book (1965), 125-128

<sup>10</sup> Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000, 115

confidence in the country's security.<sup>11</sup> United States was committing itself to make material contribution to Turkey's security, which was a clear message to the Soviet Union. And Turkey now had the means to modernize its army.<sup>12</sup> Fourth, as the forerunner of the Marshall plan and the establishment of NATO, it may be called as the first instance of the Cold War and the first glimpse of the 'containment' policy of the U.S. against the Soviets.<sup>13</sup>

Simultaneously with the onset of the cold war, a "special relationship" between Turkey and U.S. was originated. In addition to the visit of U.S.S Missouri in 1946, and the Truman Doctrine of 1947, U.S. and Turkey signed a military assistance agreement on July, 1947, more than four years before Turkey's entrance to NATO. The assistance included weaponry, equipment, as well as training aspects.<sup>14</sup>

Though The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was established In April 1949 Turkey's initial attempts to join the alliance failed because of strong opposition from some European countries. Some worried about its affect on the European Unity, while some countries had concerns about a reduction of the military aid they themselves. The British had their own designs for Turkey as a central power in the Middle East. Especially after the oil crisis with Iran in 1951, Britain's priority was the defense of the Middle East in general, and the Suez Canal in particular. The British viewed Turkey as the leader of Middle East. They wanted to form a defense organization, which would not only include the Arab States, but Turkey and Israel as well.<sup>15</sup>

During this period Turkey went through the second of its multiparty elections, which resulted in the victory of the DP(Democrat Party) under the leadership of Adnan Menderes, and less than a month later, in June 1950, the invasion of South Korea by

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<sup>11</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 25, 29

<sup>12</sup> Turkey, having not joined the WWII, had not taken part in the massive wave of military innovations that took place both in the equipments and the methods of war fighting. Moreover, the industrialization of the economy had not taken place, and the economy was not in a very good shape. As a result, the Turkish army had not been improved to the day's standards.

<sup>13</sup> Kousoulas, The Success of the Truman Doctrine Was not Accidental, 88

<sup>14</sup> Ferenc A. Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus : The Foreign Policy of Turkey, (Baltimore and London : The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 125

<sup>15</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 38, 43

North Korea presented the new government an opportunity to win the hearts of the West. The Menderes government immediately decided to send a combat brigade of 4,500 men to the war.<sup>16</sup> Close to 30,000 Turks served in this war, with about 10% casualties, impressing the allied commanders with their actions, leading General Douglas McArthur to call them: “the bravest of the brave”. This symbolic move from Turkey, which was also a “clear demonstration of its potential contribution,” was a result of its willingness to join the alliance and obtain a security guarantee from the United States.<sup>17</sup> Thus, building on the sympathy attained from its decisive action, Turkey applied for NATO membership on August 1, 1950.

The strategic view of the defense of Europe, as outlined by General Dwight D. Eisenhower - the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe -, determined Turkey’s role and its relationship with the West.<sup>18</sup> According to Eisenhower, Europe had the shape of “a long bottleneck”. The neck of the bottle was Western Europe, with Spain being the end. The wide part was Russia. There were bodies of water on both sides of the bottle.<sup>19</sup> The West had the control of these bodies of water as well as land on the other sides of them. On one side, there was England behind the North Sea, and on the other side were the Near East and South Africa behind the Mediterranean. The West needed to rely on land forces in the center, while applying great air and sea power on both sides. Turkey and Yugoslavia would be armed, while a great fleet of air and sea power should be put in the Mediterranean. Thus, in case Russia made a move towards the center, the West would strike it strongly from both sides.<sup>20</sup> Also, a control of the Soviet Union in Turkey would threaten the Western oil interests as well as the economic viability of Europe. And the inclusion of Turkey, which was the only country in the eastern Mediterranean seen as capable of prolonged resistance against Russia, would force the Soviets to commit

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<sup>16</sup>Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 47 ; Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 39 ; Erik J. Zürcher claims it was “ a brigade of 5000 men, and until the end of the war “over some 25,000” fought in Korea . Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey : A Modern History* (London, New York : I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 1993), 246

<sup>17</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 66-69, 47.

<sup>18</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 48,.

<sup>19</sup> The North Sea and the Mediterranean

<sup>20</sup> “Editorial Note,” FRUS, 1951, Vol. 3, part 1, 454



considerable forces away from the European theater. In other words, there was a “mutuality of benefits” in the Turkish-American relationship.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, despite some concerns in the alliance that extending the borders of NATO the borders of the Soviet Union might be too “provocative,”<sup>22</sup> Turkey’s membership was accepted in September 1951. Turkey and Greece became full members of NATO in February 1952.

During the Eisenhower administration, Turkey and U.S. established closer military relations. In 1955 Turkey joined the Baghdad pact, of which Britain, Iraq, Pakistan and Iran became members and U.S. was an active supporter -though not an official member.<sup>23</sup> In 1956 U-2 planes were stationed in İncirlik and electronic surveillance and intelligence installations were set up on the Black Sea coast. In 1957 U.S. even stationed military aircrafts with tactical nuclear weapons in Turkey. In January 1957 U.S. announced the Eisenhower doctrine, which proposed to offer aid to any Middle East country threatened by communism. Military assistance to Turkey during the Eisenhower administration was on average \$200 million a year.<sup>24</sup>

Despite close military cooperation during this era, one inappropriate use of the İncirlik base planted in the Turkish mind seeds of questions about the alliance. In 1958, Lebanese government asked for U.S. help against an armed insurrection which was inspired by the fall of the Iraqi regime. U.S. accepted the request and sent military forces to support the Lebanese government. Since the event required rapid action, U.S. deployed some of its forces through the İncirlik base in Turkey, though only with notification, rather than with prior consultation. <sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 48,49

<sup>22</sup> Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 41

<sup>23</sup> The Baghdad Pact was reestablished as CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) after the fall of the Hashemite regime and the withdrawal of Iraq from the pact in 1958. CENTO was dissolved after the 1979 Iranian revolution.

<sup>24</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 50-51

<sup>25</sup> Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 66-68

The Lebanon case has a number of significant implications that are worth mentioning. First of all, despite the emergency of the matter, the lack of a U.S. request for permission – even though it might be argued that Turkey would probably grant it anyway – created resentment. Despite the government’s avoidance of any negative comments about this, the opposition criticized the U.S. action as an “abuse of Turkish sovereignty” and claimed that “U.S. was defending its own interests to the detriment of Turkey’s”<sup>26</sup>. Second, it started a process of reassessment in Turkey about the Turkish commitment to NATO. The main question was regarding the scope of collaboration: Would it be only against the Soviets, or would it be a more general cooperation with the alliance on a global scope?<sup>27</sup> Third, Turkish soil was for the first time<sup>28</sup> being used as a launch pad for U.S. Middle East policy. It would be “recalled with regret” in the 1960s, when Turkey moved to a more pro-Arab posture.<sup>29</sup> Fourth, the relative ease which the U.S. operated with illuminates the underlying conviction that Turkish cooperation was taken for granted. Fifth, it is the first instance when the opposition criticized the government for collaboration with the U.S. against Turkish national interests. And last, but not the least, United States, as a global power, was prioritizing its own regional interests over those of its ally, Turkey. This is a pattern we will continue to see both in the Cuban Missile crisis and the Cyprus crisis.

The Lebanon crisis did not profoundly damage Turkish-American relations. By the end of the 1960s, together with the sympathy gained from the Korean war, and the “impressive steadfastness against Russia”, Turkey had become “the ideal ally” in the eyes of the Americans.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 67

<sup>27</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 67

<sup>28</sup> It would also be ‘the only time’ until the First Gulf War.

<sup>29</sup> Alan Makowsky, The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy (The Johns Hopkins University Press: 1999), 92,113 available from Project Muse at : <[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais\\_review/v019/19.1makovsky.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais_review/v019/19.1makovsky.html) > (19 July 2004).

<sup>30</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p.127 Alan Makowsky, The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy (The Johns Hopkins University Press: 1999), 92,113 available from Project Muse at : <[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais\\_review/v019/19.1makovsky.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais_review/v019/19.1makovsky.html) > (19 July 2004).

The removal of the Jupiter nuclear missiles from Turkey as a result of the negotiations with the Soviets over the Cuban missile crisis is one of the important events in the history of U.S.-Turkish relations, which, if handled carelessly, could have harmed the relations much more than it eventually did.

Deployment of middle range nuclear missiles in NATO was agreed in the NATO Council meeting of December 1956<sup>31</sup>, with only Britain, Italy and Turkey(despite strong criticism from U.S.S.R.) accepting to station them on their soil. In 1959 Turkey and U.S. agreed to station a squadron of Jupiter missiles in İzmir<sup>32</sup>, but , due to necessary technical preparations the missiles did not become operational until July 1962, and by that time they had already become obsolete. The important thing about the missiles was that they were given to Turkey as military aid, making them actual property of Turkey<sup>33</sup>, and only the nuclear warheads were under the total control of U.S.<sup>34</sup>They were under the operational control of SACEUR, and their use was subject to the agreement of both U.S. and Turkey<sup>35</sup> with a double key system, though they would be activated by Turkish crews. <sup>36</sup>

More than a year before the Cuban Missile crisis took shape, on April 6 1961, President Kennedy had asked the Departments of State and Defense, and Central Intelligence Agency to review the deployment of the missiles to Turkey,<sup>37</sup> but since Turkish military leaders considered them important for the defense of their country, the issue was dropped. When U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk again raised the topic with the Turkish representative at the NATO council meeting in spring 1962, the result was the same.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p.120

<sup>32</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 92

<sup>33</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 93

<sup>34</sup> “Summary Record of the Seventh Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council,” FRUS, 1961-1663, XI, 254.

<sup>35</sup> Kuniholm, *Turkey and the West Since the WWII*, 51-52

<sup>36</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p.120

<sup>37</sup> “Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Secretaries of the Army(Vance), Navy(Korth), and Air Force(Stahr)”, FRUS, 1961-1663, XVI, 695.

<sup>38</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p. 128-129

The Turkish rationale for the presence of the missiles was more political and psychological than military, regarding them as an indication of NATO's determination to use nuclear weapons against a Russian attack, and feeling an assurance from the fact that the weapons were on Turkish territory and somewhat in Turkish hands. The American reasoning about the issue was that : the missiles had little if any military value; they provided target for Soviet attack; and the new Polaris system was superior. U.S. also had some concerns about a "risk of war by miscalculation" (through a unilateral action of Turks, or a preemptive action of Soviets in case an international crisis).<sup>39</sup> The perspectives of the two countries openly diverged. U.S. was considering the case in terms of its own interest and in a broad view of NATO. Since the Polaris missiles would do the same job anyway, the absence of Jupiters would not create any security viability to U.S. or NATO. For Turkey, on the other hand, the issue was a matter of National Security. Their absence would be regarded as a security liability. Global needs of the alliance as perceived by U.S. and the National Interests of Turkey failed converge, creating disagreement. This is a pattern we will see in the Cyprus crisis as well.

For the following reasons, the U.S. government concluded not to cancel the deployment of missiles: 1-)such an action would be interpreted as a sign of weakness in the aftermath of the Vienna summit of 1961;<sup>40</sup> 2-)that Turkish reaction would be strongly adverse; 3-) since SACEUR , General Norstad, had already expressed his opinion underlining the importance the missiles to Turkish foreign Minister, it wouldn't be possible to persuade the Turkish military to abandon the project anymore.<sup>41</sup>

Later came the Cuban Missile Crisis, which had entered its last phase after Khrushchev 'e letter to Kennedy on 26, October, asking the U.S. to stop denying access to ships to the island and give a formal guarantee not to attack Cuba, in exchange for the removal of Soviet missiles from the island, since their presence was for 'defensive'

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<sup>39</sup> FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 696,700, 731, 732.

<sup>40</sup> On June 4 1961, Kennedy and Khrushchev met at a summit in Vienna. The disagreement between U.S. and Russia over Berlin lead to an exchange of threats that the two sides would go to war over the issue, <<http://www.multied.com/dates/1961.html#>>(19 July, 2004)

<sup>41</sup> "Memorandum From the Counselor of the Department of State and Chairman of the Policy Planning Council(George McGhee) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)," FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 703.

purposes, and once the defense of Cuba was guaranteed, there would be no need for those weapons<sup>42</sup>. But, the next day, on October 27, 1962, Khrushchev sent another letter to Kennedy requesting the removal of the Jupiters in Turkey in return for the removal of Soviet weapons from Cuba.<sup>43</sup>

The sensitiveness of Turkey on the issue arose from the fact that, with those missiles, Turkey had a nuclear missile system which belonged to Turkey, which Turkey was beginning to man, and over which Turkey had partial control.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the Turkish Parliament had only recently appropriated the financing of their deployment.<sup>45</sup>

Both considering the Turkish reaction because of the implication that U.S. was trading Turkish interests in order to appease the Soviets, and also to avoid further demands from Khrushchev, Kennedy chose to ignore the second letter and reply only to the first letter.<sup>46</sup> But, being aware of the relatively little military value of the missiles in Turkey, Kennedy also had prior thoughts about the issue. He believed that trading the missiles in Turkey for the Soviet missiles in Cuba -which added “50%” to the nuclear capability of the Soviet Union- would be of significant military value, and he also thought that U.S. was in a position of risking a war with Russia over obsolete missiles in Turkey, which would make the U.S. appear to be attacking Cuba “for the purpose of keeping useless missiles in Turkey”<sup>47</sup> Thus, he instructed his brother Robert to inform the Soviets that once the Soviet weapons were removed from Cuba, Jupiters in Turkey would soon be withdrawn as well, though publicly U.S. never accepted that there was any kind of ‘deal’ with the Soviets regarding the issue and the U.S. government never notified Turkey about it.<sup>48</sup> Robert Kennedy’s published memoirs of the Cuban missile crisis

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<sup>42</sup> “Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State,” FRUS, 1961-1963, XI, 235-241.

<sup>43</sup> “Message From Chairman Krushchev to President Kennedy,” FRUS, 1961-1963, XI, 257.

<sup>44</sup> “Memorandum by Policy Planning Council,” FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 735.

<sup>45</sup> Kuniholm, Turkey and the West Since the WWII, 53

<sup>46</sup> Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000, 135

<sup>47</sup> “Summary record of the Seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council,” FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 252-256.

<sup>48</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 93

called *Thirteen Days* deny that there was any “deal of any kind,” and these memoirs have generally been interpreted as containing merely an “implicit” missile-trade. But, Ted Sorensen, the editor of Robert Kennedy’s notes for publication, has later conceded that the memoirs were in fact “very explicit that [the Jupiter concession] was part of the deal.”<sup>49</sup> The missiles were removed in April 1963.

The way Cuban missile Crisis turned out left a lasting influence on Turkish-American relations. It aroused suspicions about the inextricable link between the NATO members. It presented to the Turks a clear example of the possibility of an unexpected war, and made clear to Turkey that presence of some dangerous weapons on its soil could make Turkey a target for the Soviet weapons. Turkey would thereafter feel the need to be much more careful in its dealings with both U.S. and the Soviets.<sup>50</sup> The removal of the missiles “gave Turkey the feeling that it was no more than a pawn in the American game”<sup>51</sup>. Also, the removal of mid-range nuclear missiles, despite the continuing presence of tactical nuclear weapons, significantly decreased Turkey’s strategic importance in a nuclear war.<sup>52</sup>

Yet, for many years, Turkey did not learn that U.S. was quite ready to make a deal with the Soviets-the common enemy- a deal regarding vital Turkish interests, without any consultation. Since the issue did not become public like the ‘Johnson letter’ it did not create great disappointment in the Turkish public. Also, the previous attempt of the removal of the missiles in 1962 served as a justification and gave the appearance of a policy requirement that was irrelevant to Cuba.<sup>53</sup> No question was raised during their removal about their relevance to a deal between Washington and Moscow.<sup>54</sup> In February

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<sup>49</sup> Philip Nash, The Other Missiles of October: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Jupiters, 1957-1963 (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 141.

<sup>50</sup> Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000, 136

<sup>51</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey : A Modern History (London, New York : I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 1993), 288

<sup>52</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 93-95

<sup>53</sup> Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000, 134-135

<sup>54</sup> Süha Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World: Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus (Lanham, New York, London : University Press of Virginia, 1988), 49

1963, Turkish Foreign Minister told the National Assembly that the missiles would be removed because they were obsolete and they were “of little help” to the protection of Turkey.<sup>55</sup>

In summary, it is true that both Turkey and U.S. had benefits to gain from forming a stronger relationship. The presence of a common enemy made them natural allies. Both countries had an interest in maintaining close ties. But it is also true that they had different perspectives arising from their own geographic and global statuses. U.S. was a global power that had global strategic interests, to which it expected Turkey to conform. Turkey did conform to the U.S. policies, with a very strong zeal, in fact. But, soon Turkey would slowly come to realize that the national interests of Turkey and U.S. would not always be identical.

The relations between the two countries were based on a security alliance in the framework of NATO. Turkey was an important part of NATO plans, and an important country in the southeastern flank of NATO, close to Middle East, as well as on the border of Russia. Moreover, the bases and communications facilities in Turkey provided intelligence facilities against the Russians. For Turkey, NATO meant U.S. The principal motivation of Turkey in the relations with U.S. was obtaining a security guarantee against the Soviets. Every other issue was secondary. The main motivation behind Turkish willingness to cooperate with the U.S. on other irrelevant issues was to maintain this guarantee.

During the period up to 1963, although there were some cases of conflicting interests, these issues did not give a substantial damage to the relations. Yet, there was an underlying difference in the perspectives of Turkey and U.S. towards the relations, which would surface in the Cyprus Crisis.

### **C. OVERVIEW OF EVENTS IN CYPRUS UP TO 1963**

The Cyprus dispute is a very old and complicated problem that would require a very lengthy analysis. In my overview of the events until 1963, I will not delve into the long historical detail of the Cyprus conflict. This is not in the scope of this thesis.

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<sup>55</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, p. 49 (originally cited from *Milliyet* 19 February 1963)

Therefore we will merely give the account of main events concerning the dispute, to be able to see the interactions of Turkey and U.S. in this framework.

Cyprus is an island in the north east part of the Mediterranean. It is the biggest island in the Mediterranean with a size of 3, 372 square miles. It is about 500 miles to Greek mainland, 240 miles to Egypt, 60 Miles to Syria, and only 40 miles to southern Turkey.<sup>56</sup> The location of the island needs to be mentioned, because it had an important role in the concerns and policies of both U.S. and Turkey. Since it was very close to Turkey, Turks would see the fall of it under a hostile domination – be it Greek or communist- as a threat to their country. When viewed together with the presence of numerous Greek islands on the west and southwest of Turkey, a hostile Cyprus would mean the encirclement of Turkey by enemies. U.S., on the other hand, would be concerned about preventing any Soviet influence in the island because of its importance as a base in the Mediterranean, and its strategic location. U.S., as a global power, and Turkey, as a regional partner, would have different perspectives regarding the same issue.

Much of the history of the conflict between the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots is based on the Greek Cypriot struggle for “enosis”- union of Cyprus with Greece-, and the Turkish Cypriot attempts to prevent it. Therefore, it is worth mentioning the emergence and development of the enosis idea very briefly. Never in history was Cyprus a part of Greece, but the idea of uniting all the Greek people in one state, which was called “Megali Idea”- great idea-, was born after Greece had gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1828. <sup>57</sup> Cyprus was an Ottoman territory since 1571. The British occupation of the island started in 1878, though it officially remained under Ottoman rule until 1914, when the British annexed the island.<sup>58</sup> The Greek Cypriot will for “union with motherland” was always present, but it did not gain international attention until the 1950s, when Greek Cypriots started a more assertive campaign to achieve this goal

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<sup>56</sup> Halil Ibrahim Salih, Cyprus : The Impact Of Diverse Nationalism On A State (Alabama : The University of Alabama Press, 1978), 3.

<sup>57</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 35, 36, 37.

<sup>58</sup> Turkey recognized British rule over the island in 1923.



One important dimension of the Cyprus conflict is its aspect as a “bone of contention” between Greece and Turkey. One of the main motivations of Johnson for sending his letter in June 1964 was the belief that a Turkish intervention would cause a war between Greece and Turkey. Therefore, it might be helpful to be aware of how the relations between them evolved during the crisis. Until the 1950s Greece and Turkey had good relations, and Greece did not support the enosis. The involvement of Greece in the enosis struggle started after February 1951, when Greece made it an official national policy to support enosis. Turkey and Greece had joined NATO in February 1952, signed “a Treaty of Peace and Friendship” in February 1953, and had formed the Balkan Pact together with Yugoslavia in August 1954.<sup>59</sup> But, as Greece became more involved in the struggle for enosis, it was inevitable that relations between Turkey and Greece would deteriorate. By 1955, the historical animosity between the Turks and Greeks had been revived. One important indication of this was the anti-Greek riots in İstanbul and İzmir in Turkey in September 1955.<sup>60</sup>

During the early 1950s, Greece tried to resolve the issue through U.N., but Britain managed to avert the discussion of the matter in U.N. by claiming that it was an “internal” matter of the UK. <sup>61</sup> The armed struggle of the Greek Cypriots for self determination started in April 1955, and continued until 1959. At the initial stage of the rebellion, it was a matter between Britain and the Greek Cypriots. Turkish Cypriots were against independence, because they thought it would lead to enosis. The incorporation of the Turkish Cypriots into the police force by the British further worsened relations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. In August 1955 Turkey initially demanded the return of the island to Turkey<sup>62</sup>, but by the end of 1956 Turkey changed its policy to demanding the separate self-determination right of Turkish Cypriots and *taksim* (partition, division of the island among Greeks and Turks). After 1957, Greeks would

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<sup>59</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 49.

<sup>60</sup> Montegale Stearns, Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, (New York : Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 28,29. (There are some strong claims that the riots were orchestrated by the Menderes government.)

<sup>61</sup> Salih, Cyprus, 8.

<sup>62</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 59-63.

modify their demands arguing for “self-determination” and independence of Cyprus which would in effect be a “transitional stage” for enosis.<sup>63</sup>

Turkey was initially reluctant to get involved in the Cyprus problem because it thought Britain was resolute to keep the island. Active Turkish involvement in the dispute actually began after Britain decided to “shake [Turkey] out of its passivity” in June 1955 in order to strengthen its own position by inviting Turkey and Greece to a joint conference to discuss the Cyprus problem.<sup>64</sup> By the end of November 1957, the main adversary of the Greeks on the issue of Cyprus had by now become Turkey, instead of Britain.<sup>65</sup>

During the period of 1955-1959, a number of different plans were proposed by different parties (mostly by the British, once by U.S.). Turkey refused to accept most of these proposals for the self government of Cyprus arguing that they did not rule out enosis, while Greece refused these plans because “enosis was not clearly identified as an eventual result of self government.” These would be the main positions of the two countries throughout the late 1950s to all the different proposals.<sup>66</sup> It is important to note here the stern Turkish stance against enosis, because when it came to 1964, U.S. would be arguing that enosis would “satisfy” Turkish concerns over Cyprus.

As the issue began to be handled in the U.N., the Cyprus conflict gained an international character. This was for the most part to the benefit of the Greek side because of the Soviet and Third World support to their struggle for “self-determination,” but the 1958 Middle East crisis turned the tide against the Greeks. In July 1958 Iraq’s Hashemite dynasty, which was friendly to the British, was toppled. U.S. and Britain went in to help the Lebanon Government, which was in the danger of facing the same fate. The details of the crisis is not our concern here, but the Middle East crisis had an unexpected side effect

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<sup>63</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 101. originally quoted in : John Reddaway, Burdened with Cyprus: The British Connection, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 74.

<sup>64</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 59-63.

<sup>65</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 111-113.

<sup>66</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers And The Third World, 29.

on the Cyprus question. It strengthened Turkey's position,<sup>67</sup> because the West became more conscious of the importance of Turkey as an ally in that volatile region. This clearly shows that the Cyprus dispute was not immune to the influence of international circumstances. The strength of the positions of the parties in the dispute would be greatly affected by not only their own strength and the logic of their arguments, but also by the level of international support they could acquire. A change in the international opinion could suddenly turn the tide against one of the parties. In 1964, international opinion would be overwhelmingly pro-Greek, which would be one of the reasons for the U.S. policy to shift against Turkey. Therefore it is important to point out that there was a similar example to the opposite effect in the history of the Cyprus conflict.

In February 1959, bilateral talks between first Greece and Turkey, which later included the Turkish and Greek Cypriots, resulted in agreement for the independence for Cyprus. The London-Zurich accords, signed on 19 February started a new era in the history of Cyprus.<sup>68</sup> The constitution, signed on 16 August 1960,<sup>69</sup> established the Republic of Cyprus as an independent state. It banned partition as well as "union with any other State." Three treaties shaped the new state's statute. The *Treaty of Establishment* designated 99sq. miles of Cyprus territory as sovereign British bases. The *Treaty of Alliance* created a Tripartite headquarters in Cyprus, and stationed 950 Greek, 650 Turkish military personnel on the island. The *Treaty of Guarantee* designated Turkey, Greece, and Britain to guarantee the territorial integrity and independence of Cyprus, as well as "the state of affairs established by the 1960 Constitution". Article IV

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<sup>67</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 124.

<sup>68</sup> Zaim M. Necatigil, The Cyprus Question and the Turkish position in International Law, (Oxford, New York, Toronto : Oxford University Press, 1996), 3. ; Nasuh Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, (New York : Nova Science Publishers, 2003), 12.

<sup>69</sup> Pierre Oberling, The Road To Bellapadis : The Turkish Cypriot Exodus to Northern Cyprus, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1982), 63.

of the Treaty of Guarantee was especially significant, because it would be legal justification of Turkish threats to intervene in the face of the Governmental crisis that broke out in 1963:<sup>70</sup>

In so far as common or concerted action may not prove possible, each the three guaranteeing Powers reserves the right to take action with the sole aim of re-establishing the state of affairs created by the present Treaty.

The constitution was based on the principle of avoiding the dominance of one community over the other. It instituted an “intricate system of checks and balances designed to protect the rights of the Turkish Cypriot minority without paralyzing the state’s ability to function as a sovereign state which had become a member of the United Nations in the year of its independence.”<sup>71</sup> Some provisions of the constitution would make the administration of the country more difficult. The main problem was the absence of trust between the two communities to make such a complex system work. Thus, troubles began almost immediately after independence.<sup>72</sup> A series of disagreements emerged between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots. Broadly, Greek Cypriots continuously demanded amendment of the constitution, while Turkish Cypriots insisted on its full implementation.<sup>73</sup>

Makarios, as President of the independent Cyprus Republic, repeatedly demanded the changing of the constitution, arguing that it was unworkable. After independence, as he saw that the West was all in favor of the status-quo, Makarios sought to obtain the support of the Third World as well as the Soviets in the U.N. And, at the same time, he continued to violate the articles of the constitution regarding the rights of the Turkish Cypriots.<sup>74</sup> The Greek government did not support the Greek Cypriot demands until May

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<sup>70</sup> For all the articles in the three treaties see : Joseph S. Joseph, Cyprus : Ethnic Conflict and International Politics From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union, (New York : St. Martin’s Press Inc., 1997), 138-145.

<sup>71</sup> Monteagle Stearns, Entangled Allies : U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus (New York : Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 34.

<sup>72</sup> Stearns, Entangled Allies, 34

<sup>73</sup> Salih, Cyprus : The Impact Of Diverse Nationalism On A State, 20.

<sup>74</sup> Oberling, The Road To Bellapadis, 67, 69.

1963. Starting by suggesting the revision of the London agreements on 11 May 1963,<sup>75</sup> the Greek government thereafter became an active supporter of the Greek Cypriot demands for amending the constitution.

Greek Cypriot government had made a plan -later called the “Akritas plan”- which had the ultimate goal of enosis by suppressing the Turkish community. The Turkish Cypriots would be “suppressed” in a few days, preventing outside intervention and facilitating subsequent actions.<sup>76</sup> On November 3 1963, in a church congregation in Paralimni, Makarios had stated : “ What is our desire? We have proclaimed it many times: our union with the motherland, eternal Greece ... [t]he struggle will continue until complete fulfillment.”<sup>77</sup>

On 30 November 1963, Makarios submitted his 13 proposals for the amendment of the constitution. The proposals would create an “integrated unitary state [with majority rule and] some limited guarantees for the Turkish community.”<sup>78</sup>

Turkish Cypriots believed that a compromise with Makarios regarding the constitution would open the way for the constitution to be “swept away”.<sup>79</sup> This Turkish Cypriot view was shared by the Turkish Government, which was also concerned that a collapse of the system in Cyprus would lead to enosis.<sup>80</sup>

It is now widely accepted that Greek Cypriot government had made a plan -later called the “Akritas plan”- which had the ultimate goal of enosis by suppressing the Turkish community. The Turkish Cypriots would be “suppressed” in a few days, preventing outside intervention and facilitating subsequent actions.<sup>81</sup> On November 3

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<sup>75</sup>Ball, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus” (23 May 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 562.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid*, 179.

<sup>77</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers And The Third World, 56 originally quoted from: Zenon Stavrinides, The Cyprus Conflict: National Identity and Statehood (Wakefield: Stavrinides, 1976), 40.

<sup>78</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 20 originally quoted from: R. Stephens, Cyprus, 179.

<sup>79</sup> Wilkins, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State,” (16 January 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 543.

<sup>80</sup> Hare, “Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State,” (14 February 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 547.

<sup>81</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 178.

1963, in a church congregation in Paralimni, Makarios had stated: “What is our desire? We have proclaimed it many times: our union with the motherland, eternal Greece ... [t]he struggle will continue until complete fulfillment.”<sup>82</sup>

Britain had been a supporter of the Turkish Cypriot community before independence. But after 1960, Britain completely reversed its position. London was persuaded that it had long-term interests in Cyprus regarding the SBAs they stationed on the island. And in order to safeguard these interests, Britain would support the Greek Cypriots.<sup>83</sup> By the end of October Britain’s reluctance to mediate in the problem became clear to U.S.<sup>84</sup> Britain felt it was dependent on the goodwill of Makarios because of the British bases on the island. U.S. became slowly more and more involved in the Cyprus problem.<sup>85</sup>

#### **D. U.S. POLICY TOWARDS CYPRUS FROM 1950S UNTIL 1963**

In the early fifties, U.S. policy towards Cyprus had been a policy of “non-involvement”. The Cyprus problem was considered to be a matter between the Cypriots and the British. U.S. thinking was affected by various components. The “anti-colonialist” approach, which was a popular feeling among the Americans at the time, was favoring the Cypriot nationalists. The anti-communist approach, which suspected that the real force behind the mutinies in the colonies was communism, worked against taking the issue to the U.N. because this would provide an opportunity for Soviets to gain influence and exploit the problem. And close relations (“special relationship”) with the British, who wanted to preserve their rule of the island, prevented U.S. from taking a position against Britain.<sup>86</sup> Thus, the U.S. position as expressed in July 1952 by Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State, was that: “U.S. not party to [the] problem”, but the matter should not

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<sup>82</sup> Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers And The Third World*, 56 originally quoted from: Zenon Stavrinides, *The Cyprus Conflict: National Identity and Statehood* (Wakefield: Stavrinides, 1976), 40.

<sup>83</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 176 originally from: Jones, “Embtel London 3190” (18 February 1963): NSF, Countries, Cyprus, 2/13/63-2/28/63, box 65, doc. 8, JFK-Library.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, 181.

<sup>85</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 181.

<sup>86</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 43.

be taken to the U.N. This would, Acheson argued, damage the Greek-Turk “amity” which was developed through great care, and cause a strong Turkish reaction in the U.N.<sup>87</sup>

During the upheaval on the island first between the Greek Cypriots and the British, later between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and during the negotiations regarding the Cyprus problem until 1960, U.S. was an “interesting observer, but not a participant.”<sup>88</sup> U.S. did not try to impose any sort of solution, but also followed the events very closely to prevent the issue to be resolved in a way that would threaten the U.S. interests. It had its own priorities, and observed the development of events very closely sometimes by supporting specific proposals, sometimes suggesting its own solutions- though never forcing them-. As long as the solution of the problem satisfied the U.S. priorities, it would not object to any kind of solution. U.S. continually tried to refrain from taking sides in the conflict. U.S. favored the solution to be in terms granting Turkey a base on the island in exchange for unitary self-determination. But, U.S. also preferred to remain uninvolved as long as the British went along implementing their own proposals.<sup>89</sup>

U.S. viewed the problem from the perspective of the cold war.<sup>90</sup> This created two main priorities. One was the preservation of NATO solidarity, the other was prevention of Soviet influence in Cyprus and the Mediterranean. The latter necessitated avoiding taking the matter to the United Nations. Because, since the problem was between NATO members, there would be a split in NATO about the support for either party, and even if there was no split at least one member of the alliance would probably be alienated. The Soviets, and more specifically the communist bloc, would exploit this weakness. They would support the Greek Cypriots for their struggle for independence. Britain, Greece,

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<sup>87</sup> [Dean]Acheson, “Cyprus : United States Interest In Agitation For Enosis (Union of Cyprus With Greece) And The Question Of Self-Determination For Cyprus At The United Nations,” (18 July 1952), FRUS, 1952-1954, VIII: 674-675.

<sup>88</sup> Stearns, Entangled Allies : U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, 25.

<sup>89</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 123. ; FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 672-673.

<sup>90</sup> When, on April 1, 1955, EOKA (Ethnike Organosis Kypriou Agoniston- “ National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) launched its first terrorist attacks, starting the armed struggle against the British, The first American reaction was to suspect the communists.(Charles Foley(ed.), The Memoirs of General Grivas, (New York, Washington : Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1964), 33 ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 56-58) This is a good example of cold war mentality effecting the view of U.S. to the problem.

and Turkey were all NATO members. Therefore the Soviet bloc was both against British rule of the island and enosis, as well as it was against partition. Because, all of these options would mean NATO presence on the island. An independent Cyprus, on the other hand, would probably be “non-aligned,” which, especially considering the sizable strength of the communists among the Greek Cypriots would bring Soviet influence to the strategically located island and thereupon to the Mediterranean. Therefore, U.S. was strongly against the issue going to the U.N. It feared that such an action would have “extremely deleterious effects in Aegean”, and provide the Soviets with an opportunity to exploit the disagreement between NATO members.<sup>91</sup> U.S. wanted the issue to be solved through negotiations among the concerned parties. The U.S. concern about a “split among NATO partners” gained even higher priority after the anti-Greek riots in Turkey in September 1955. U.S. now feared “an irreparable disruption of NATO’s southeastern flank”. This concern affected the U.S. policy in the U.N. meeting of the same month, in which U.S. voted against the “inscription”, taking a position against Greece.<sup>92</sup> By April 1957, the main U.S. concern would become the “reestablishment of good relations between [Turkey] and [Greece].”<sup>93</sup> U.S. would always look at the issue in terms of the Cold war, and maybe too much so, to the point of disregarding the bilateral aspect of the dispute among the conflicting parties.

The U.S. perspective of the issue as a Cold War phenomenon influenced its expectations from the parties as well. It expected the conflicting NATO members in the Cyprus dispute to view the problem from the same perspective as the U.S. did, ignore their grievances and disagreements and focus on NATO solidarity. There are a number of occasions that illustrate this point: After the anti-Greek riots of September 1955 in Turkey, U.S. would urge the two countries to “subordinate their bilateral differences to the larger interests of NATO and their special relationship with United States.”<sup>94</sup> In

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<sup>91</sup> Dulles, “The Secretary of State To The Embassy In Greece,” no.365(5 April 1954), FRUS, 1952-1954, VIII: 684

<sup>92</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 63-67.

<sup>93</sup> Herter, “Telegram From the department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom,” FRUS, 1955-1957, XXIV, 474.

<sup>94</sup> Monteagle Stearns, Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, (New York : Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 28,29.



1956, when U.S. developed a proposal which had unfavorable terms for Turkey,<sup>95</sup> “Turkey would have to be convinced that going along with it would serve the more important NATO interests.”<sup>96</sup> Again, in January 1957, when the Cyprus issue was once more taken to the U.N., U.S. was frustrated when a resolution calling for negotiations among the three parties was rejected. U.S. leaders argued: “major issues of preserving NATO solidarity and forestalling communist penetration of Mediterranean [were] being subordinated to the lesser issue of Cyprus and more narrow interests of three parties concerned therewith.”<sup>97</sup> In September 1958, when Turkey was gaining the upper hand in the Cyprus dispute after the Lebanon Crisis, U.S. would tell Greece that the latter had better “measure its immediate objectives respecting Cyprus against its bond of interest against other nations of the West.”<sup>98</sup> U.S. was underestimating the bilateral dimension of the struggle, which in case of Turkey and Greece, dated more than a century. The Cyprus conflict had unearthed the long history of enmity between Greeks and Turks. The fact that both Greece and Turkey were members of NATO was not enough to remove the historical hostilities between the two countries, especially while the two were in continuous struggle against each other over Cyprus.

The U.S. concern about preserving NATO solidarity led it to follow an “impartial” role in the dispute. Despite occasional slight shifts of policy in favor of one of the parties, it is fair to say that U.S. tried to avoid taking sides. The attempts of Greece and Britain to pull Washington to their side were never fully successful, though sometimes they partially succeeded. When, in January 1954, the British called for American support to British policy of keeping Cyprus under British rule, U.S. turned them down. Yet, U.S. also warned the Greeks against taking the issue to U.N.<sup>99</sup> Thus,

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<sup>95</sup>Nicolet argues that it was prepared by Julius C. Holmes, Special Assistant to U.S. Secretary of State(Dulles). The so-called “Holmes mission,” as Nicolet asserts, called for “ten-year autonomy” of Cyprus, with a plebiscite in the end, and a guarantee for the British to preserve their bases.

<sup>96</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 85-87, 88-90.

<sup>97</sup> Dulles, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission at the United Nations,” FRUS,1955-1957, XXIV, 451. ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 95.

<sup>98</sup> “Letter From President Eisenhower to King Paul I,” (September 30 1958), FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 715, 717.

<sup>99</sup> Dulles, “The Secretary of State To The Embassy In Greece,” no.365(5 April 1954), FRUS, 1952-1954, VIII: 684

U.S. was not supporting either side. The problem was between two NATO allies, and U.S. did not want to take sides.<sup>100</sup> The same attitude continued when Turkey became involved, and even when Britain withdrew and the dispute turned into a Greek-Turkish struggle. Whether it was Britain, Greece, or Turkey, U.S. continuously avoided taking sides in fear of alienating the other, and damaging the alliance. The U.S. policy formulated in January 1957 was that U.S. would “favor a solution on which all parties [could] agree”.<sup>101</sup> We will see that this may not always be possible. U.S., as a super power, was in a dilemma. It wanted the problem to be solved, but, at the same time, it did not want to alienate either of its two allies.

There were also times when the U.S. policy would shift to one side due to different political considerations. Though, these never amounted to taking a strong position against either party. When the matter was taken to the U.N. in 1954, U.S. position was “tilted” towards the Greeks (U.S. abstained from the vote about whether or not to handle the issue in the U.N.). There are a number of reasons for this position of U.S. One particularly interesting point is that, “the first massive Greek lobbying in the congress” effected the Eisenhower administration’s position, since there would be elections for the Congress in November that year. Greek-Americans lobbied for the “self-determination” of the Cyprus people. The lobbying was so effective that Britain and U.S. agreed to delay the handling of the issue after the November elections, so that Americans could be more helpful to the British. When the issue was handled in U.N. after the elections, it was decided to postpone handling the issue, with a promise to the Greeks that they could appeal to U.N. in 1955 again. The Greeks were very disappointed at this.<sup>102</sup> It is interesting to see how effective domestic pressure can be, especially in times of election. The significant point here is that, the same circumstances would be present in 1964, when Johnson would send his famous letter. There would be this time Presidential elections scheduled in November 1964, and the letter would be written in June same year.

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<sup>100</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 45, 46.

<sup>101</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 95. originally quoted from : Pargons to Elbrick, Memorandum : “ Situation regarding Cyprus,” (16 February 1957) : SDCDF, box 3278, doc. 747C.00/1-1657, NARA.

<sup>102</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 47-48, 51-53, 54, 55.

Thus, especially having in mind the effects of Greek lobby in 1954, it should only be natural that it could have affected the U.S. policy in 1964. The domestic concerns affecting the Turkish-American relations would be more obvious in 2003, when the Turkish government's domestic concerns would be a significant factor in the disagreement.

The U.S. was also worried about a Greek withdrawal from NATO in response to an unfavorable resolution of the Cyprus crisis. The U.S. would be worried that Greece might adopt "at least a partial disengagement from its NATO obligations" in case UK went ahead with the implementation of the Macmillan plan,<sup>103</sup> therefore proposed some modifications to soften the Greek position "without causing the Turks to run out."<sup>104</sup> Turkey also thought that the Cyprus crisis could cause a change of government in Cyprus, which could bring Greece to a neutralist stance, and remove Turkey's geographical ties with NATO. Therefore, when Turkey's increasing importance in the eyes of the West by the end of 1950 was creating a trend towards partition on the island, Turkey would take initiative to reach a compromising agreement rather than a complete defeat for Greece.<sup>105</sup>

One other U.S. concern about the eventual resolution of the problem was to favor a long-term, viable solution. This was clearly illustrated when, in June 1956, the British made a new proposal suggesting the issue of self-determination to be considered by NATO ten years later, making it subject to the approval of both Turkey and Greece. U.S. did not support this so-called "June plan" because it would give Turkey and Greece the power to prevent any future change of the "international status" of the island.<sup>106</sup> Although I have not been able to find an exact quote or document proving this, my conclusion from my research is that U.S. did not perceive partition as a long-term viable solution. This was not always true throughout the Cyprus dispute. Early in June 1956,

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<sup>103</sup> Nicolet 128 ; "National Intelligence Estimate," (September 23 1958), FRUS, X, pt. 2, 635.

<sup>104</sup> Dulles, "Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State," FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 695-696. ; Nicolet, 126.

<sup>105</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 133.

<sup>106</sup> "Memorandum of a Conversation[Between Dulles and British Ambassador to U.S.]," FRUS, 1955-1957, XXIV, 371-374. ; "Letter From President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden," FRUS, 1955-1957, XXIV, 374-375.

Eisenhower himself had come up with the idea of partitioning the island by transferring the populations, moving the Turkish Cypriots to the north.<sup>107</sup> In March 1957, when Macmillan suggested to Eisenhower that “perhaps partition would be the best answer,”<sup>108</sup> Eisenhower responded: “if we supported partition, including most of the NATO partners, Greece might find it very difficult to oppose.”<sup>109</sup> These thoughts were never implemented, though. U.S. position regarding partition was outlined on 18 September 1956 as “a desperate solution of last resort, [...] [which] should not be encouraged”.<sup>110</sup> The implementation of partition, since it would require mass moving of people, would create political and economic problems, as well as “bitterness and resentment” in the population.<sup>111</sup> It is important to examine the U.S. position towards partition, because as understood by U.S., and as expressed in the Johnson letter of 1964, U.S. perceived that the real aim of a possible Turkish intervention would be to achieve partition. The letter, therefore, illustrates a strong U.S. position against partition.

Thus, when Cyprus became independent in 1960, U.S. very much welcomed it. All U.S. concerns had been met. All the parties had signed the agreements. The preservation of NATO unity was successfully accomplished. Also, since all parties had reached an agreement, U.S. had kept its impartiality without alienating either side in the conflict. There was no fear of Greek withdrawal from NATO anymore. The British bases remained under British rule, therefore guaranteeing NATO access. And, as the problem was solved, Soviets would not find any opportunity in the U.N. to exploit the division in NATO or gain influence on the island by supporting the Greek Cypriots. And, all this was accomplished with the initiative of the conflicting parts themselves, without the need for a moderator. It was almost a perfect scenario for U.S. interests. There was only one

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<sup>107</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 90, 91, 92.

<sup>108</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 99,100 . Quote originally from : “ Continuation of Memorandum of Dinner Conversation at the Mid-Ocean Club,” (22 March 1957) : Ann Whitman File, International Series, Bermuda Conference, March 20-24, 1957, box 3, DDE-Library.

<sup>109</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 99,100 . Quote originally from : “ Continuation of Memorandum of Dinner Conversation at the Mid-Ocean Club,” (22 March 1957), 12.

<sup>110</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 93. originally from : Owen T. Jones, Director of the Office of GTI, to James Lampton Berry, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, Memorandum : “Cyprus : Partition Proposal” (18 September 1956).

<sup>111</sup> Herter, “Telegram From the department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom,” FRUS, 1955-1957, XXIV, 474.

weak point, though. Cyprus had become independent, and non-aligned. And, the communists had a sizable strength among the Greek Cypriots, which could help the Soviets gain influence on the island. Therefore, the main concern of U.S. after independence would be the prevention of the communists from gaining power in the island. U.S. also believed that Cyprus needed to be linked to the West as strongly as possible in order to prevent the Soviets from acquiring any strongholds in the Mediterranean.<sup>112</sup> U.S. also had important communications facilities on the island, which it wanted to safeguard.<sup>113</sup>

As the problem reemerged, it was only natural that old concerns and priorities would reemerge in the U.S. Thus, the U.S. policy in the early 1960s would be quite similar to the policy in the 1950s. This was because the main U.S. concern, the Cold War, continued to be the biggest issue affecting the U.S. interests. There were some new issues concerning U.S. policymakers after 1960, too. These would be the concern about a communist takeover of the island, and the preservation of U.S. communications facilities. The U.S. would therefore attempt to accomplish all of the following : 1) prevent the issue from causing a rift between Turkey and Greece, which might cause the disruption of NATO's southern flank or Greece's withdrawal from NATO; 2) prevent Soviets from gaining an influence over Cyprus either through communists or through U.N.; 3) remain impartial between the sides in the conflict; 4) having seen that an unviable solution would recreate problems rather than solving them, resolve the issue in a way that would not re-erupt in the future again. It does not seem realistic for U.S. to set all these goals. Some of these goals had a very strong tendency to contradict with each other. This would also be a problem in 2003, when U.S. would try to satisfy both the Kurdish groups in Iraq and Turkey, while accomplishing its own policy goals.

U.S. policy toward Cyprus was outlined in a new NSC report in January 1960. According to this report, U.S. worried that the collapse of the Cyprus agreements would have serious consequences. It could harm Turkish Greek relations, create a new wave of

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<sup>112</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 156-157.

<sup>113</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 141-144 ; Brendan O'Malley and Ian Craig, The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion, 82.(These facilities were, as stated in the same source: a central net control post for CIA's Middle East Communications Activity(MECA), and an Foreign Broadcast Information Service(FBIS), which was monitoring foreign radio broadcasts).

violence on the island, and have serious damage on the pro-Western government in Greece. Thus, it was the U.S. aim for the new independent Cyprus to become a “stable and unifying, rather than disruptive” element in the relations between Turkey, Greece, and Britain. The U.S. objectives in Cyprus were outlined as follows: <sup>114</sup>

A politically stable Cyprus, linking Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom in a cooperative relationship, and willing and able to resist Communist subversion.

The continued availability to the West of the British military facilities on Cyprus

The continued, unhampered use of U.S. communications facilities on Cyprus<sup>115</sup>.

Cypriot economic development conducive to the development and maintenance of political stability, a pro-Western orientation and free democratic institutions.<sup>116</sup>

U.S. acknowledged that the implementation of the constitution required “good will,” <sup>117</sup> i.e. a strong will among both of the two communities to make them work. Very soon after independence, as the problems in Cyprus began to resurface, it would be understood that the “trust” necessary for such a good will was absent from both sides.

U.S. had seriously worried about the communist threat in Cyprus, and this bias prevented it from seeing the real aspect of the problem in Cyprus for a long time. The inter-communal conflict was of secondary importance to U.S. concerns. The reemergence of inter-communal violence on the island, though, clearly showed that the old animosity between the two communities was reborn, or more realistically, it had never ceased to exist. Thereupon, it became impossible for U.S. to ignore the bilateral aspect of the

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<sup>114</sup> National Security Council Report-NSC 6003, “Statement of U.S. Policy Toward Cyprus” (9 February 1960), FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 819-828.

<sup>115</sup> The facilities were as mentioned as “vital to U.S. communications throughout the Middle East and [...] important to [...] collection of foreign intelligence.” It was also asserted that there was no other place in the area for those missions to be accomplished (ibid, 820).

<sup>116</sup> The report also identified the communist AKEL party to be the “most serious threat to Makarios’ political dominance” (ibid, 822).

<sup>117</sup> National Security Council Report-NSC 6003, “Statement of U.S. Policy Toward Cyprus,” (9 February 1960), FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 819-828.

dispute. On 5 June 1962 Makarios made a visit to U.S. In this visit, Kennedy urged him to take measures against the communists to prevent “another Cuban situation from happening in Cyprus.” On 30-31 August Vice President Johnson made a visit to Cyprus, in which he warned Makarios of the communist threat. During this visit, Johnson also met with the Turkish Cypriot representatives, who gave him a memorandum about the problems between the two communities on the island. This visit probably helped U.S. to realize that the inter-communal problems on Cyprus were more severe than the threat of communism.<sup>118</sup> Yet, U.S. was once again unwilling to become involved in the Cyprus problem. The Department of State was cautioning the Embassy in Cyprus to reject any effort to draw U.S. into the dispute.<sup>119</sup> Since two NATO allies were on opposite sides, it was almost certain that at least one ally would be alienated. And a neutral stance would probably alienate both.<sup>120</sup>

As the constitutional crisis developed, U.S. was reluctant to take sides in the beginning, but with the prodding of Britain, and the U.S. ambassador in Cyprus, slowly changed its position to –behind-the scene- support for the amendment of the constitution. U.S. reached the conclusion that the long-term objective of Makarios was not enosis, but amending the constitution and the agreements, which “circumscribe[d] sovereignty of republic.”<sup>121</sup> This was not, as the subsequent events -and the remarks of Makarios himself- would show, a correct analysis. U.S. was in favor of changes as long as all parties agreed to it.<sup>122</sup> U.S. continued its belief that the solution should be found “in Cyprus by Cypriots”, and tried to discourage Makarios from taking the matter to U.N.<sup>123</sup> On June 6 Makarios told U.S. his conclusion that time had come to change revise the

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<sup>118</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 166, 171, 173, 174.

<sup>119</sup> Rusk, “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus” (9 January 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 540.

<sup>120</sup> H. W. Brands, “America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964,” Middle Eastern Studies 23, no. 3 (1987): 350-351.

<sup>121</sup> Ball, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus” (4 April 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 555.

<sup>122</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers And The Third World, 54.

<sup>123</sup> Ball, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus” (23 May 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 563.

Constitution and Treaty of Guarantee.<sup>124</sup> U.S. was in favor of changes in the constitution: “there is no doubt that certain provisions of Constitution [...] should be revised.” Yet, whatever course of action U.S. followed, the main objective would be to prevent Cyprus to continue to be “bone of contention” between Greece and Turkey.<sup>125</sup> U.S. would welcome “reasonable” proposals. U.S. was aware that Britain had urged Makarios to follow this path, and “[U.S.] strongly supported British views.”<sup>126</sup> The U.S. Department of State had decided to “fully back” the British plan, which aimed to bring Turkey to approve the amendment requests.<sup>127</sup>

Turkey had three main concerns about the Cypriot dispute: The threat posed to Turkey’s security in case the island fell under the control of a hostile power; the fate and well-being of the Turkish Cypriots on the island, and to prevent the Cyprus dispute to weaken Turkey’s ties to the West by causing a Greek withdrawal from NATO.

Turkey was very much aware of the Cold War, even much more involved in its struggle against communism than most other members of the alliance. But, this did not mean that Turkey did not have other security concerns than the Soviets. Turkey shared the U.S. concern about the fall of Cyprus into the communist bloc. Turkey and U.S. had the same strategic concern at this point. Neither of them would like to see a communist Cyprus, or even any degree of Soviet influence in the island. In fact it might be argued that, such an action would bring far more dangerous consequences for Turkey than for U.S. Yet, the difference of Turkish approach was that Turkey did not consider Greece as a friendly country though it was a member of NATO. Thus, enosis would mean the fall of Cyprus under hostile domination, which had important ramifications for Turkey’s security, especially of southern Turkey. Turkey was also concerned about a danger of communism in three of its neighbors: Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Moreover, Turkey thought that the Cyprus crisis could cause a change of government in Cyprus, which could bring

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<sup>124</sup> Wilkins, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (6 June 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 565.

<sup>125</sup> McKierman, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (21 June 1963), 1961-1963, XVI, 567.

<sup>126</sup> Wilkins, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (26 November 1963), FRUS, 1963-1963, XVI, 584.

<sup>127</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 182.



Greece to a neutralist stance, and remove Turkey's geographical ties with NATO.<sup>128</sup> Thus, though the international opinion was leaning towards partition by the end of the 1950s, Turkey had taken the initiative to resolve the issue in more favorable terms for Greece.

The Turkish Government was also under intense domestic pressure about its Cyprus policy. This pressure was two-fold: one was the strength of public feelings about the killing of Turkish Cypriots by Greeks, the other was the pressure from the armed forces to take a more active policy in Cyprus, namely to intervene militarily. Both these aspects of domestic pressure are expressed in a number of occasions:-Ambassador Hare's telegram of 14 February 1963, clearly emphasizes the domestic concerns of the government regarding the Cyprus dispute. Hare argues that the Turkish Parliament, as well as the Turkish public and the press, was a source of great pressure on the Government to avoid concessions to the Greeks. This pressure, as understood from Hare's telegram, was so strong as to threaten the preservation of the coalition Government.<sup>129</sup> In November 6, 1963, Hare again underlined the domestic pressure on the government. The coalition government was very weak, and this weakness was making a strong Cyprus policy a political "must."<sup>130</sup> In December 2, 1963, Hare reasserts that a soft policy on Cyprus was to be seen as "weakness," and warns against potential counter effects of external pressures on Turkey when there is a political crisis.<sup>131</sup>

The Greek government, on the other hand had its own priorities. Aware of the pro-Turkish and pro-partition international opinion by the end of 1950s, Greece was content with the 1959 agreements and the 1960 constitution. Therefore Greece did not support the initial attempts of Greek Cypriots to change the constitution, but Greece changed its Cyprus policy in May 1963, and decided to support Makarios.<sup>132</sup> Greece

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>129</sup> Hare, "Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State" (14 February 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 548.

<sup>130</sup> Hare, "Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State" (6 November 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 583.

<sup>131</sup> Hare, "Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State" (7 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 588.

<sup>132</sup> Ball, "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus" (23 May 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 562.

would favor the changing of the constitution in order to reduce the Turkish Cypriots status to proportional representation, which would mean that they would not be able to prevent enosis. Thus, first the independence of the island would be achieved, and later, since an “independent” country would be free to do what it chooses; Cyprus would be united with Greece. The only obstacle to this “union” was the Turkish Cypriots.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Throughout the Cyprus dispute, Turkey and U.S. viewed the Cyprus problem from different perspectives. U.S. was a global power with global concerns and responsibilities. Turkey was, on the other hand, a regional partner of U.S., and an important ally in NATO against the common threat of communism, i.e. the Soviets. Thus U.S. expected Turkey to look at the Cyprus problem from the same perspective, but this was not possible. U.S. was always looking at the Cyprus conflict through the Cold-War lenses. The main U.S. concerns about the Cyprus conflict were:

- ✓ To prevent the Cyprus issue from disrupting the southern flank of NATO
- ✓ To avoid a communist takeover of the island, and prevent the matter to be taken to U.N., because both would bring Soviet influence over the island
- ✓ Not to alienate either Greece or Turkey by taking any side in the conflict
- ✓ To achieve a long-term, stable solution to the dispute <sup>133</sup>
- ✓ To safeguard NATO access to the island (by keeping the British bases under British control),
- ✓ To Safeguard the continuous availability of the U.S. communications facilities on the island

Turkey also thought in terms of the cold war, but this did not prevent it from prioritizing its own national interests against its role in the global war against communism. The main Turkish concerns on the island were the prevention of the fall of Cyprus under hostile rule, and prevent the annihilation of Turkish Cypriots by Greeks. Thus Turkey was firmly against enosis, as well as a communist takeover of the island.

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<sup>133</sup> This policy goal would prompt U.S. support for the amendment of the constitution

Turkey saw the amendment of the constitution as only a gateway to enosis, thus insisted on the full implementation of it.

It is also my conclusion that, the Cyprus policy of U.S. from the mid-1950s until 1963 had a moderately pro-Turkish stance. In every assessment, strategic realities clearly favored Turkey against Greece.<sup>134</sup> The strategic concerns about Turkey's geographic location and its commitment and willingness for cooperation against the Soviets created a strong incentive in the U.S. to prevent the alienation of Turkey through an unfavorable resolution of the Cyprus conflict. Yet, U.S. also had strong concerns about Greece, too. Therefore, the "tilt" towards Turkey was never so strong as to take a position against Greece or Greek Cypriots.

All the parties concerned about the Cyprus dispute were affected by the domestic pressures as well. This was especially important for the Turkish government, which did not want to be seen "weak" by its public, as well as the army.

One other aspect we see through this era, especially prominent during the 1958 Middle East Crisis, is that the international circumstances also have an effect the policies of the parties.

The analysis of the developments in Cyprus until 1963 and the development of the foreign policies in the U.S. and Turkey shows us that both in U.S. and in Turkey the forming of foreign policy was influenced by three main factors: the strategic concerns about the issue, domestic concerns, and the international circumstances. All three of them have a potential to outweigh the other two concerns at different moments. For example, during an election period, domestic concerns may be the dominant factor in the forming of foreign policy. Also, an international crisis may increase one's view about the other party. The strategic concerns seem to be more stable, but they may change as well.

In the following chapter, we will analyze the further interactions between the two countries under changing domestic and international circumstances, compare the evolving policies of both countries regarding the Cyprus dispute, and illustrate the roots of disagreement.

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<sup>134</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 245.

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### **III. FROM THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS TO THE JOHNSON LETTER**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

As it was expressed in the conclusion of the previous chapter, U.S. policy in Cyprus until 1963 was slightly in favor of Turkey. Yet, as we will see in this chapter, U.S. policy will slowly change in relation to events in 1964, and finally result in a very strong anti-Turkish stance in June 1964 in the form of the Johnson letter. Understanding the dynamic of this change requires a more detailed familiarity with the main events shaping the foreign policy decisions of Turkey and U.S. in 1964. Also, the Johnson letter of 1964 was a reaction to the Turkish intention to intervene militarily on the island. The Turkish threat in turn, was a reaction the events on Cyprus. Therefore it is important to be aware of what happened in Cyprus between December 1963 and June 1964 that would cause Turkey to threaten military intervention as well as U.S. to take a strong position against Turkey. We need to examine what happened first, so that we can analyze why each side reacted differently to the same events. As we examine the key events, we will analyze each side's reaction, and underline the reasons why Turkey and U.S. behaved the way they did in 1964.

June 1964 is not the only time Turkey threatened to intervene militarily in Cyprus. After the Cyprus crisis erupted by the end of 1963, Turkey threatened to use its rights from the Treaty of Guarantee on three other occasions. In order to understand the Johnson letter and its implications more clearly, it is important to analyze the previous cases of Turkish threats of intervention, the U.S. responses to these occasions, and identify the similarities as well as differences between the June 1964 Turkish threat of intervention, and the U.S. response.

Also between December 1963 and June 1964, the Cyprus dispute would be taken to the U.N. twice. Yet, we will see that there is a striking difference in two U.N. meetings in terms of the U.S. position. This will be used to argue that U.S. policy did indeed change, and the March 1964 U.N. meeting would mark the breaking point in U.S. Cyprus policy.

Since U.S. policy in Cyprus has been thoroughly analyzed in Chapter 2, and the changes in this policy will be highlighted in this chapter, we still need a more through analysis of the Turkish broader concerns. We will examine how Turkey perceived the Cyprus problem in 1964, and what strategic concerns affected its policy.

Finally, in the last section of this chapter , the evolution of U.S. Cyprus policy will be examined to show that U.S. slowly developed a long-term solution plan for Cyprus in 1964, which basically would unite the island with Greece in exchange of some concessions to Turkey. This section will show us, how U.S. formulated its foreign policy by examining each possible solution, and how it reached a decision.

## **B. THE EVENTS LEADING TO THE CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY, AND THE JOHNSON LETTER**

The events leading to the Johnson letter started after the 13 proposals of Makarios in November 1963 to amend the constitution. Therefore, in our analysis of U.S. and Turkish policy in Cyprus and the resulting crisis in the Turkish-American relations, we will concentrate on the developments on the island.

The proposals of Makarios in November 1963 were very well timed, indeed. There was a government crisis in Turkey.<sup>135</sup> Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis, who had negotiated the London-Zurich agreements and supported the status quo after the independence, had lost the elections in November.<sup>136</sup> Meanwhile a change of Presidency had taken place in U.S. in November 1963. After Kennedy's assassination Lyndon Johnson had ascended to the Presidency.<sup>137</sup> It may be argued that this timing of the proposals had an effect on the reactions of the concerned parties. U.S. would not oppose the proposals. It would be false, however, to consider this position totally the result of the inexperience of the new administration, because Johnson was also the vice-president of the previous administration. Johnson was quite familiar with the Cyprus dispute. He had even made a visit to Cyprus in 1962. Greece had already announced its support for

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<sup>135</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 22.

<sup>136</sup> Tozun Bahceli, "Cyprus in the Politics of Turkey since 1955," in Norma Salem(ed.), Cyprus: A Regional Conflict and Its Resolution (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 64-65.

<sup>137</sup> Brands, "America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964," 351.

amendment of constitution. It is very probable that the timing of the proposals was purposeful on the side of Greek Cypriots, who calculated that the government crisis in Turkey and the resulting preoccupation of the Turkish government with domestic problems would prevent a severe Turkish reaction to the proposals and force Turkey into a more conciliatory mood. But, this would prove to be a false calculation indeed.<sup>138</sup> This will also be a factor in 2003, when U.S. government would expect that an inexperienced government would be more flexible and less demanding, and it would turn out to be that a new government would be more cautious about making compromises and more worried about being seen “weak.” The internal politics of one country would be seen to have unexpected effects on the foreign policy decisions.

İsmet İnönü’s coalition government was dissolved on 2 December. Concluding that delaying a response would be considered as: “evidence of weakness,” Foreign Minister Erkin had reached the decision to reject the proposals “definitely and publicly,” on 7 December.<sup>139</sup> Raymond A Hare., U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, attributed this stern Turkish stance as a proof of his repeated warnings about the “danger of putting pressure on GOT in time of political strain.”<sup>140</sup> Internal governmental concerns were hardening foreign policy positions instead of softening them. This would also be the case in 2003 when the newly formed government in Turkey, which was in fact formed out of a party which was only one years old and practically in a “testing” period to prove itself to the Turkish public, would find it hard to justify making compromises to U.S. in fear of being seen not strong enough to protect the Turkish interests.

Official U.S. position in the first months of 1964 was still that U.S. had enough on its plate to deal with, and did not want to get involved in the Cyprus dispute. It was a problem that needed to be dealt between the two communities, and the guarantor powers.

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<sup>138</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 22 originally from: Erim, “Reminiscences on Cyprus,” Foreign Policy (Dis Politika), vol.4, Nos. 2-3, February 1975, p.158.

<sup>139</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 185-186 ; Hare, “ Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State” (7 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 587-588.

<sup>140</sup> Hare, “Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State” (7 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 588.

<sup>141</sup> U.S. policy of avoiding getting involved or taking sides was continuing in the general framework established after the independence of Cyprus.

With the re-eruption of violence on the island, U.S. would slowly be drawn more into the conflict, and would soon have to make up its mind in terms of the eventual resolution of the conflict. On December 21, when Greek Cypriot “special constables”<sup>142</sup> killed two Turkish Cypriots in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia,<sup>143</sup> this event triggered the reemergence of inter-communal violence on the island, which lasted practically until 1974. As the shootings quickly spread over the island, the Turkish and Greek troops (650 Turkish, 950 Greek), stationed on the island after the 1959 accords joined the fighting as well. This was a far more dangerous outcome than the inter-communal strife. For the first time two NATO powers were in effect fighting each other.<sup>144</sup> This is a very important event that validates the U.S. concerns about a potential war between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus.

The details of the inter-communal conflict are out of the purpose of this study, but it is this violence that prompted the Turkish threats for intervention. If we want to generalize the results of the 1963-1964 violence: during this era, about half of the Turkish Cypriots left their homes and took refuge in the areas controlled by Turkish Cypriots. There were 233 Turkish settlements before the violence erupted, and out of these 98 settlements were evacuated. 4,000 Turkish Cypriots lost their jobs, and 25, 000 fled to live in the refuge camps.<sup>145</sup> Not later than March 1964, the total number of displaced Turkish Cypriots would reach “45,000 or 50,000” while the number of displaced Greek Cypriots would be about 6,000.<sup>146</sup> As the numbers clearly show, and as Nicolet rightly asserts, “Turkish Cypriots were the primary victims, not least because the Turkish police

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<sup>141</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 186.

<sup>142</sup> These were, according to Oberling: “illegally armed Greek civilians”.

<sup>143</sup> Oberling, The Road To Bellapadis, 87, 88, 89.

<sup>144</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 189.

<sup>145</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 69-70.

<sup>146</sup> Wilkins, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State,” (23 March 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 54.



and gendarmerie had been disarmed prior to the shootings [...].”<sup>147</sup> This is important, because it clearly shows that Turkish concerns about the safety of the Turkish Cypriots were indeed well founded, and not merely an excuse for an intervention.

The reemergence of violence had a double effect of validating both Turkish concerns and U.S. concerns about the potential dangers inherent in the problem. The mass-killing of Turkish Cypriots validated Turkish concerns over a possible massacre, and increased the domestic pressure on the Turkish government to take a stronger action in response to the sufferings of the Turks on the island. While, on the other hand, the presence of Turkish and Greek troops on the island, and the fact that these two NATO forces had literally engaged in warfare against each other further increased U.S. concerns that a war between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, which would shatter the southern flank of the alliance, was a very strong possibility. These different perspectives would continue to be the case all through the constitutional crisis, and even in the case of the Johnson letter. The main argument behind Turkish intention to intervene would be to protect the safety of Turkish Cypriots, while the main U.S. concern would be to prevent a war between Greece and Turkey. U.S., as a global power, and Turkey as a regional partner were not seeing eye to eye in the problem. They had different points of view, and these were affecting the way they saw the events in Cyprus.

On the one hand, U.S. was seeing everything through the lenses of the Cold War. U.S. was concerned about the greater ramifications of events. It was worried about the weakening of the alliance in case of a Greek-Turkish war, or a potential Russian intervention. In view of these possibly disastrous possibilities, the mass killing of Turkish Cypriots could be practically ignored in the eyes of U.S. On the other hand, the people on the island were Turkish Cypriots, namely Turks, who had migrated to the island from the Turkish mainland through the centuries that it was under Turkish rule. The Turkish public was especially very sensitive about the violence on the island. Turks were worried about a massacre of the Turkish Cypriots. This was putting great pressure on the government in Turkey. Any concession was seen as leading to the loss of more Turkish

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<sup>147</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 189.

lives This did not mean that Turkey was not concerned about the greater ramifications of Greek-Turkish war, or a Russian intervention, but the internal concerns were so strong that, added with the security concerns over Cyprus falling under complete Greek rule, they were forcing the government to take risks.

### **1. First Turkish Threat of Intervention -23 December 1964**

In response to the erupting violence on the island, Turkey called the three guarantor states for a joint military intervention on 23 December.<sup>148</sup> Britain and U.S. did not think this was a good idea.<sup>149</sup> Turkey was under strong domestic pressure to intervene militarily. In addition to the public opinion, Turkish Armed Forces was also pressuring the government to take a more active position. On 24 December, The Turkish ambassador to U.S. told to Dean Rusk -U.S. Secretary of State- that : “real element of pressure was that Turkish armed forces would act with or without civilian government.”<sup>150</sup> On 25 December, asserting that Turkish Cypriot community was in the danger of a massacre, Turkey threatened to intervene unilaterally in case guarantor powers failed to control the situation.<sup>151</sup> Yet, Turkey refrained from intervention and merely sent its Fighter Aircrafts to conduct a warning flight over Cyprus.<sup>152</sup>

There are a number of reasons why Turkey did not carry out its threat and intervene unilaterally in December 1963

1. İnönü had a very cautious personality, which made him extremely reluctant for such an action.<sup>153</sup> His cautiousness had kept Turkey out of WWII. He believed that a military intervention in Cyprus would probably

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<sup>148</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 187 originally from Laboisie, EMBtel Athens 897 (23 December 1963): SDSNF, 1963, POL 25 CYP, box 3883, NARA, 2.

<sup>149</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 187.

<sup>150</sup> Rusk, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cyprus” (24 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 596.

<sup>151</sup> Finletter, “Telegram From the Mission to the North Atlantic Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State” (25 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 597.

<sup>152</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 22.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

lead to a war between Greece and Turkey. He was also aware that international opinion was not supportive of the Turkish cause at the time. İnönü further believed that a Turkish intervention could possibly result in failure as well, and considered that a diplomatic defeat would be less dangerous than a military one.<sup>154</sup>

2. Soviet Union was supporting Greek Cypriots, and a Turkish intervention could prompt an unwanted Soviet action.<sup>155</sup> Moscow had criticized Turkish flights over Cyprus as interference to “domestic affairs”.<sup>156</sup> Though there were British bases on the island, Cyprus was a non-aligned country. A Turkish intervention would probably lead to partition, and partition would likely lead to double-enosis<sup>157</sup>, which would turn the island into a NATO member. Partition would also prevent the Greek Cypriot communist party AKEL from establishing a communist regime on Cyprus.<sup>158</sup>
3. Turkish armed forces were not ready for an amphibious operation. The fact that they were not equipped or trained for such an action left the air strikes as the only option. Turkey did not have “a single landing craft” at the time.<sup>159</sup> In fact, İnönü would tell to the opposition in January that Turkey had “no military plans” for an invasion to Cyprus.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 66, 69. (His belief about a diplomatic and military defeat is expressed by a member of his cabinet and Bölükbaşı quotes this opinion in: Alparslan Türkeş, Dis Politikamız ve Kıbrıs (İstanbul: Kutlug Yayınları, 1974), 257.

<sup>155</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 23.

<sup>156</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 67.

<sup>157</sup> “Double-Enosis”, as U.S. ambassador in London would suggest as an alternative solution in April 1964 means: “partition with the union of two parts to Greece and Turkey respectively,” [ Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228 originally from: Bruce, Embtel London 4931 (8 April 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP box 2083, NARA, part II, 2. ]

<sup>158</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 67 originally from: Thomas W. Adams and Alvin J. Cottrell, Cyprus Between East and West (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 35.

<sup>159</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 68.

<sup>160</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 108 ; *ibid*, 23, 24.

On 26 December, after the Turkish aircrafts had flown over Cyprus, Britain and Greece finally agreed for “a joint peace keeping operation,” which turned out to be implemented as British troops patrolling the island in order to deter violence.<sup>161</sup>

There are a number of aspects of this first Turkish threat of military intervention and the U.S. response: First, Turkey threatened unilateral action and subsequently sent its aircrafts after two days of communication with the other guarantor powers,<sup>162</sup> and only when Greek Cypriots refused to cease the attacks despite the joint appeal of the three guarantor powers.<sup>163</sup> This showed that Turkey was concerned about the legality of a military intervention and it was following the necessary procedures established in the treaty of guarantee in order to “take action.” This may also suggest that the intention of Turkish intervention was not to establish partition, but merely to reestablish the constitution. If that was the case all through the conflict, it means that U.S. would read Turkish intentions wrong by supposing that Turkey was intending to establish partition by a military intervention. U.S. would argue in the Johnson letter that Turkey was intending to establish partition by intervening militarily. This validates the general opinion that Turkey has always been legalistic in terms of its international relations. Turkey believed that it had a legal justification for an intervention in Iraq and wanted to preserve this right and implement it when necessary. In 2003, this concern would come out in a different way again. Turkey would be emphasizing the need for a legal justification to invade Iraq.

Second, U.S. response to this first Turkish threat of unilateral intervention is important to note, because it included an argument that would be repeated in the Johnson letter. U.S. reminded Turkey and Greece of the MAP agreements, and warned both countries that the use of MAP equipment for something other than its original purpose

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<sup>161</sup> Süha Bölükbaşı, “The Johnson Letter Revisited,” Middle Eastern Studies, 29, no. 3 (1993): 512.

<sup>162</sup> The Treaty of Guarantee called for “consultation” among the guarantor power, before taking an action.

<sup>163</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 107, 108.

without a “clear prior consent of U.S.” would be a violation of the agreements.<sup>164</sup> Yet, the only mention of the purpose of military aid in the 1947 article asserted that the assistance was requested by Turkey for the “protection of her freedom and independence,” which could be interpreted differently.<sup>165</sup>

Third, it is also very important to note that the Turkish threat of military intervention finally convinced the other guarantor powers for a peace keeping operation. Turkey had been demanding this for a long time, but Greece and Britain had refused this until the Turkish threat of unilateral intervention. Thus, it might be noted in Turkey that the best method of diplomacy and the best way to gain concession from the other parties was to threaten military intervention. This may be an additional reason for the subsequent Turkish threats. Yet, by June 1964, it will be seen that each time Turkey threatened to intervene, and failed to do so, it would diminish the credibility of the next threat, and by June 1964, Turkey would feel the need to go through and implement its decision. In other words, Turkey would in a way back itself into a corner. Either it would take all the risks and take action to protect its security interests as well as the fate of its co-nationals, or, it would do nothing and watch the mass killing of Turkish Cypriots, and a gradual unification of the island with Greece. Thus, the June 1964 threat will be a “real” one in which Turkish government would in fact intend to intervene despite possible dangers in taking such a course.

## **2. U.N. in December 1963**

On December 27, Makarios appealed to the U.N., citing the flight of Turkish aircrafts, and the false claim of approaching Turkish vessels to the island as the reasons. U.S. tried to dissuade him from taking such an action. The main U.S. concern was, as it always had been, to prevent any Soviet influence in the Cyprus problem and to avoid providing the Soviets an opportunity for anti-Western propaganda. U.S., though it did not want to get involved in the issue, wanted the problem to be solved between the three

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<sup>164</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 189 originally from: “Telegram from the Chief of the Joint U.S. Mission fro Military Aid to Turkey (JU.S.MMAT) Ankara QDQ CO787 (25 December 1963): SDCNF, 1963, POL 25 CYP, box 3883, NARA; Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 58.

<sup>165</sup> Harris, Troubled Alliance, 108(footnote 8).

NATO members.<sup>166</sup> According to George Ball, “involving the United Nations risked giving the communist countries leverage in that strategically placed island.” Moreover, U.N. would be slow to take an action, and “the Turks would not wait, tired of continued outrages against Turkish Cypriotes.” He added: “then we would have a full-scale war between two NATO allies in the Mediterranean.” U.S. also believed Turkey considered a military intervention as “almost inevitable”, one which would be determined by the way events turned out, rather than on the initiative of Turks themselves. Ball further concluded that: “an exploding Cyprus could not only endanger our Mediterranean position but undermine the whole southern flank of NATO.”<sup>167</sup> Thus, U.S. policy of avoiding the U.N. was still in effect in December 1963. This policy would not last a very long time. By March 1964, U.S. would conclude that it could not prevent the issue from being taken to U.N.

After the U.N. meeting ended without reaching any agreement, U.S. had concluded that the reason of the Greek Cypriot appeal to the U.N. was not the “alleged” approach of Turkish ships, but because the “Greek Cypriots hoped to leap-frog [the] treaties by involving [the] U.N. in [the] Cyprus question and by invoking [the] right of self-determination and claiming infringement of sovereignty.”<sup>168</sup> Thus, it was clear to U.S. by this time that the real intent of Greek Cypriots was to abrogate the treaties in order to achieve “self-determination,” which practically meant enosis.

### **3. U.S. Takeover of the Cyprus Problem from Britain – February 1964**

In mid-January 1964, Britain organized a conference in London among the concerned parties to discuss the Cyprus dispute. Turkey, Britain, and the Greek Cypriots presented their own plans, none of which was accepted.<sup>169</sup> On 24 January 1964, as it had become clear that the London Conference was “going nowhere”, Britain asked U.S. about

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<sup>166</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 25.

<sup>167</sup> George W. Ball, The Past Has Another Pattern : Memoirs (New York, London : London & Company, 1983), 340, 341.

<sup>168</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 190-191; Harriman, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission in the United Nations” (28 December 1963), FRUS, 1961-1963, XVI, 601.

<sup>169</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 26 ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 193.

whether U.S. would prefer a U.N. “peace-keeping” force, or a force “drawn from NATO countries,” and further mentioned that Greece had suggested the latter. U.S. Secretary of State did not give a “final” answer to this question, though he obviously preferred the second option. His main concern was about a U.S. involvement in such a force. This might cause a situation in which U.S. troops in Cyprus were shooting at the Turkish Cypriots, and this would probably put the 17,000 U.S. troops in Turkey in a dangerous position. He was also concerned about the “important installations” U.S. had on the island.<sup>170</sup> We see two trends here: one is the continuing intention to avoid becoming deeply involved in the problem, and the second is the concern of protecting U.S. interests by safeguarding the communications facilities on the island.

At this moment, U.S. Undersecretary of State, George Ball, voluntarily took the responsibility of the Cyprus problem into his hand. Thereafter, he would handle the issue on his own until 1965.<sup>171</sup> Since he would be the main person responsible for the Cyprus policy of U.S., his views that we mention in this text are important, and most often, represent the official U.S. policy.

On 25 January, asserting that they were no longer ready to deal with the problem alone, the British asked for U.S. agreement for the internationalization of the problem.<sup>172</sup> It was becoming clear that more active U.S. involvement would be necessary. But U.S. was still reluctant to take over from the British. It already had too much on its plate. In addition to the cold war and the Berlin disputes with the Soviets, U.S. was getting increasingly more involved in Vietnam, it was facing problems in Panama, was involved in Congo, and “foresaw mounting difficulties with Indonesia.”<sup>173</sup>

In addition to strategic concerns regarding the Cyprus question, U.S. had some domestic concerns, as well, which affected its Cyprus policy. There were a considerable number of Greek Americans in U.S., and there would be an election in November in

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<sup>170</sup> Brands, “America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964,” 351 ; “Memorandum of Conversation” (24 January 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 1.

<sup>171</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 196.

<sup>172</sup> “Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and the Under Secretary of State Ball” (25 January 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 2.

<sup>173</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 340.

1964. This concern necessitated President's involvement in the problem. Phillips H. Talbot, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, was saying: "I would not think that in view of the political implications for ourselves in the election year with the number of Greek-Americans in this country [...] a decision can hardly be made by anyone lower."<sup>174</sup>

At the night of 27 January President Johnson decided to send General Lyman Lemnitzer to Turkey and Greece to quiet down the situation.<sup>175</sup> Lemnitzer was SACEUR (Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, Europe), and he was fully aware of the danger to NATO. He believed that the biggest threat in the region was the growing presence of Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean. Hence, "Greece and Turkey needed to cooperate and could not be allowed to fight over Cyprus." Bosphorus and Dardanelles were vital for the control of Mediterranean, since they were the exit points. The threat to the preservation of these straits was coming from the direction of Thrace. They could be easily approached from Bulgaria. He was also concerned that "the loss of Hellenic Thrace and eastern Macedonia would result in outflanking the straits from the west." He thus concluded that the major strategic issue Turkey and Greece were faced with was "the defense of these key areas."<sup>176</sup> His views probably represent the way U.S. viewed the situation in 1964. Thus, it is clear that U.S. was still thinking in terms of the Cold War, and not concentrating on the bilateral aspect of the problem.

This was not true for all the U.S. diplomatic establishment, though. One can identify two main bodies of thought. Mainly, those U.S. diplomats who had deeper information about the Turkish thinking on the issue seem to have a more cautious view about expecting Turkey to disregard its immediate national interests and focus on Cold War priorities. U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Raymond A. Hare, would continuously warn the Department of State to pay more attention to the domestic concerns of the Turkish governments, especially during political crisis. U.S. Undersecretary of State, George Ball,

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<sup>174</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 196 originally from: Ball to Talbot, Telcon (25 January 1964): Personal Papers of George Ball, box 2, doc. 2, LBJ-Library.

<sup>175</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 198.

<sup>176</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 199 originally from: Lemnitzer, "The Strategic Problems of NATO's Northern and Southern Flanks," 103.



would also be more sympathetic to the Turkish cause, at least up until March 1964. The State Department officials in Washington, and the U.S. military establishment –like Lemnitzer- would, on the other hand, have a more Cold-War-centric view. The exception of Ball arises from his experience of having visited all the concerned capitals, and heard the arguments first hand. This would continue to be the case over and over again throughout the Cyprus dispute. Yet, after March 1964, even those sympathetic to the Turkish concerns would change their stand and agree with the others that the solution lied in satisfying Greek concerns and only “saving the Turkish pride.” Therefore, the difference between those in the capital city versus the local representatives would be overcome by the overriding policy concerns. There would also be a difference of opinion among the U.S. officials regarding Turkey’s role in an Iraq war in 2003. The Department of Defense, which would have acquired a stronger say in international relations by then, would have much more optimistic expectations from Turkey regarding their acceptance of U.S. demands, while the Department of State officials, most significantly Secretary of State Colin Powell, would be more cautious and less optimistic.

#### **4. Second Threat of Intervention: 28 January 1964**

On 28 January, 1964, İnönü told Hare that Turkey had decided to intervene in Cyprus unless U.S. “gave them an answer the following morning.”<sup>177</sup> The reason of the Turkish threat was a Greek Cypriot attack against the Turkish Cypriots, in which they massacred 215 Turks.<sup>178</sup> The same day, Lemnitzer arrived in Turkey and later reported to U.S. that there was no imminent Turkish intervention, and that “Turks promised to consult with NATO before any unilateral move.”<sup>179</sup> To make such a promise to U.S. would obviously restrict Turkey’s actions in the future, and it does not seem logical for Turkey to commit itself to informing NATO (i.e. U.S.) before a unilateral action, because it was obvious that U.S. did not favor such an action. Failing to do this would, as it happened in June 1964, would be an additional obstacle to gain U.S. support. In his letter of June 1964, Johnson would criticize the Turkish decision to intervene as being contrary

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<sup>177</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 341.

<sup>178</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 201 originally cited from Franz, Der Zypernconflict, 16.

<sup>179</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 201.

to what he had been promised: that U.S. would be “fully” consulted before such a decision.<sup>180</sup> Then why did İnönü choose to commit himself? In my opinion, this was because of Turkey’s concern not to alienate U.S. The Soviet Union was still the primary threat for Turkey’s security, and a military intervention in Cyprus could possibly lead to a Soviet reaction. The main Turkish asset for its security against the Soviet Union was NATO’s commitment to Turkey. Thus, Turkey wanted to protect its co-nationals in Cyprus, but, at the same time, it did not want to endanger its own security by making a move that would both provoke its principal enemy and endanger its ties with its allies at the same time.

That same day, Ball stressed to Johnson that U.S. ought to avoid becoming mediator in the Cyprus dispute, since, he said, “anyone who settles this is going to come down hard on the Greeks.”<sup>181</sup> This sentence is very important, because it shows that as late as 28 January 1964, U.S. was thinking that it would be the Greeks who would have to make more concessions in the Cyprus dispute. This is indeed surprising, because, less than 40 days later, after the U.N. meeting, the tide would turn completely against Turkey, and U.S. would be demanding much more concessions from Turkey than from Greece.

Domestic concerns of the Turkish government were an important factor in the second Turkish threat of military intervention. The government was under increasing pressure to do something to stop the mass-killing of the Turkish Cypriots by the Greek Cypriots, and Turkey was expecting U.S. to take a more active position in the resolution of the issue. On 24 January, Turkish Ambassador to U.S. told Talbot that İnönü was curious about why U.S. was “doing nothing” in spite of continuous “inquiries” from Turkey. And he asserted that İnönü needed: “something to calm potentially serious public reaction to new Cyprus incidents.”<sup>182</sup> This sentence is very important for a number of aspects:

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<sup>180</sup> The full text of the letter available at: Rusk, “Telegram from the department of State to the Embassy in Turkey” (5 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 107-110.

<sup>181</sup> “Editorial Note,” FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 8.

<sup>182</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 63 originally from : Tel. No. 454 (25 Jan. 1964), NSCHF: *Cyprus Crisis*

First, it shows that İnönü wants more U.S. involvement in the Cyprus dispute, and is frustrated with the U.S. inaction. According to Bölükbaşı, the reason for this was because İnönü believed that if U.S. became more involved and “forced the parties to negotiate”, the problem would be solved to the advantage of Turkey “easily and with little risk.” He further quotes an interview of İnönü on 25 January in which İnönü argues that he wanted U.S. to be aware of all the “facts” relating to the dispute. Because, İnönü said: “once U.S. understood the facts, I could not imagine it would ignore its responsibilities.”<sup>183</sup>

Second, İnönü’s emphasis on public reaction shows that the government was under intense domestic pressure to do something about the Cyprus problem. Moreover, Bölükbaşı argues, “the armed forces were dissatisfied with his [İnönü’s] passivity regarding the Cyprus Crisis.”<sup>184</sup> This argument confirms the Turkish ambassador’s comments of 24 December as expressed above. Bölükbaşı argues that U.S. involvement in the dispute would “make it easier for him to call for U.S. mediation and resist the pressures of pro-intervention circles, including the military.”<sup>185</sup>

It is very hard to come up with a suggestion as to what U.S. could have done realistically. But, the truth is, a more active U.S. involvement was necessary for both the Greeks and Turks to justify a compromise. In the absence of that, the public opinion in both countries were forcing the governments to take a more rigid stance. An active U.S., which would develop, and promote a compromise plan that could answer the main concerns of each parties –though not all of them- would bring the parties closer to an agreement. Yet, U.S. probably thought that, though Turkey would be forthcoming in such a situation, the Greeks would not want to make any compromises, at all. What prevented U.S. from such a course of action was, in my opinion, the concerns over alienating one of the parties in the dispute, most specifically Greece.

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<sup>183</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 63-64 originally from : Cumhuriyet, İstanbul, 26 Jan. 1964 ; Ulus, Ankara, 27 Jan. 1964.

<sup>184</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 64 (Bölükbaşı argues that U.S. intelligence reports confirmed the dissatisfaction of armed forces, but he does not cite any source for this argument.)

<sup>185</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 65.

On 29 January U.S. reversed its position about not committing U.S. troops to a peace force in Cyprus. It agreed to participate in such a force. This is very important because no matter what the reason was, U.S. reversed its decision and took a more active role after Turkish threat of intervention. Bölükbaşı argues that the main reason for the change in U.S. policy was indeed the Turkish threat of intervention. He argues that this “shows the effectiveness of İnönü’s use of the leverage of invasion threats.”<sup>186</sup> Nicolet does not agree with Bölükbaşı. He argues that Bölükbaşı is exaggerating the effect of Turkish threats and that Johnson had already understood that a NATO force could not be forced without the participation of U.S., and İnönü’s threat may have only “accelerated and further justified” that decision.<sup>187</sup> One other explanation to this change of policy on the part of U.S. came from Philip Windsor. He argues that Turkey gathered its fleet off Iskenderun, and seeing this, Makarios “telegraphed to Moscow for help” the next day. The other day, U.S. announced that it was ready to participate in an international force in Cyprus. The quick change of U.S. position after the appeal of Makarios to Moscow is, according to Windsor, because of U.S. concern to avoid U.N. involvement in the case.<sup>188</sup>

Whatever the case, the important thing is not exactly why U.S. changed its position, but how the Turkish government perceived it. And in that case, it is very probable that Turkey perceived the change of U.S. position as a result of the threat of intervention. Thus, it is very probable that İnönü believed in his ability to influence U.S. policy with these threats.<sup>189</sup> Though the reading of the events by İnönü had certain accuracy, the influence of the Turkish threats over U.S. policy was not as significant as İnönü thought it was. It was true that Turkey’s threats did influence U.S. policy, but this influence did not result in a policy change. The small changes in U.S. policies did not affect the overall policy of U.S. in Cyprus. This is important, because it brings out the

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<sup>186</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 64. (Nasuh Uslu has the same opinion as well : Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 29)

<sup>187</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 201.

<sup>188</sup> Philip Windsor, NATO and the Cyprus Crisis, (London: The Institute for Strategic Studies, Nov.1964), 12-13 (Windsor has all the dates one day ahead, though. He gives the date of U.S. change of decision as 30 January, for example. This might be because of the difference in local times).

<sup>189</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 65.

importance of signaling and reading that was even more important in the 2003 crisis. In 2003 some Turkish officials, though not all, would believe that Turkey could prevent the war, or U.S. could not invade Iraq without Turkish support. The huge demands of U.S. from Turkey, and some extraordinary diplomatic behaviors on the part of U.S. administration would merely serve the purpose of validating these beliefs.

On 31 January 1964, after U.S. had agreed to participate, Britain proposed a 10,000-strong NATO force under British command. The force, despite being made up of NATO forces, would not be under NATO control. One day later the Turkish and Greek governments accepted the plan, but Makarios refused the plan on 4 February 1964.<sup>190</sup>

### **5. Ball Mission: February 1964**

On 8 February, Ball went on his mission to the region to discuss the problem with the interested parties. His main goal in the trip was to reach a solution about a peace-keeping force that would prevent a Greek-Turkish war over Cyprus.<sup>191</sup> Before he arrived in Cyprus, Ball concluded that U.S. should not participate in a peacekeeping force. The reasons for the change of his opinion were: the growing antagonism in Cyprus to U.S., which would put the American troops in danger; concerns about domestic opposition in U.S. during an election year; and strong refusal of the Greeks to a NATO plan.<sup>192</sup> Yet, U.S. would keep this as a secret for the moment. Ball's intention was to "allow the administration to avoid the blame for failure of the NATO force," and to put the blame on Makarios.<sup>193</sup> Ball revised his plan into a U.N. force, and gained Greece's and Turkey's approval for it.<sup>194</sup>

After his visit to Ankara, Ball concluded that Turkey was becoming increasingly impatient and that "given the excited state of public opinion, any overnight killing on the island might force the Turkish military to intervene." From his memoirs, it is clear that he had a special sympathy both for İnönü's past deeds in the history of Turkey and for his

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<sup>190</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 28-29

<sup>191</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 207.

<sup>192</sup> Brands, "America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964," 353.

<sup>193</sup> Brands, "America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964," 353.

<sup>194</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 207-210 ; Ball, Memoirs, 343.

approach to the Cyprus problem. He left Ankara once again convinced that “Turkey had a strong responsible government,”<sup>195</sup> while, at the same time, he was convinced that Turkey was not “bluffing.”<sup>196</sup> İnönü had also made it clear to U.S. that it did not trust the British troops on the island for enforcing the peace, since the instructions of these troops were “not to shoot,” but merely give advice. This approach was certainly “not enough” for Turkish concerns, since it failed to stop the killing. Turkey was, at the same time, convinced that a Turkish intervention would prompt a British withdrawal and a Greek intervention “against [Turkey].”<sup>197</sup> The accounts of Ball suggest that U.S. was aware of the Turkish sensitivities, and İnönü’s comments clearly illustrates that Turkey was aware of the inherent danger of a war with Greece in case of an intervention.

On 12 February Ball arrived in Nicosia, His talks with Makarios failed to produce an agreement. Makarios was insisting on taking the matter to U.N. Security Council. His intent was to involve the U.N. in the dispute to the effect that the Treaties of Guarantee would be abolished.<sup>198</sup> According to Ball, the main reason behind this approach was “to block off Turkish intervention so that he and his Greek Cypriots could go on happily massacring Turkish Cypriots.” He adds: “Obviously we would never permit that.” During Ball’s stay in Cyprus, the Greek Cypriots killed about fifty Turkish Cypriots “in some cases bulldozers crushing their flimsy houses.”<sup>199</sup> Ball repeatedly asked Makarios to stop the bloodshed, but Makarios’ response clearly shows the weakness of the arguments claiming about his efforts to stop the bloodshed: “But, Mr. Secretary, the Greeks and Turks have lived together for two thousand years on this island and there have always been occasional incidents; we are quite used to this.” Ball responded by saying that the world would not stand by and watch this happen.

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<sup>195</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 343.

<sup>196</sup> Süha Bölükbaşı, “The Johnson Letter Revisited,” Middle Eastern Studies, 29, no. 3 (1993): 515 originally from: Tel. No 3961, from Ball to President Johnson and Dean Rusk (16 February 1964) in NSCHF: Cyprus Crisis

<sup>197</sup> Hare, “Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State” (11 February 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 20.

<sup>198</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 207 originally from : Labouisse, Embtel Athens 1197 (10 February 1964): NSF, NSC Histories, Cyprus Crisis, Dec. 1963-Dec. 1967, box. 16, doc. 71c, LBJ-Library, 3.

<sup>199</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 344-345.

To gain Makarios' acceptance, Ball revised his plan. The peacekeeping force would be composed of Commonwealth countries and countries like Sweden.<sup>200</sup> Yet, despite Ball's revision of the plan, Makarios insisted on rejecting the peacekeeping force. Ball concluded that Makarios would not ever agree to accept a peacekeeping force on the island, since the only thing the Greek Cypriots wanted was "to be left alone to kill Turkish Cypriots." These accounts of Ball's negotiations with Makarios are important because they reveal that U.S. government was aware of the situation the Turkish Cypriots were facing, and that, it was trying to stop them.

Thus, Ball made a new plan that would be implemented without the need for the consent of Makarios.<sup>201</sup> He came up with a plan of a joint intervention by the three guarantor powers. A peacekeeping force made up of Turkey, Greece, and Britain would be set up on the island until the matter was resolved in the U.N. Thus the Turkish minority would be protected until the long discussions in the U.N. come to an end and effective international peacekeeping force was set up on the island. According to Ball, this would prevent partition as well. But the major flaw of the plan was that it would insert the British back into the Cyprus dispute, something the British did not want at all.<sup>202</sup> Therefore this plan failed, as well. In the relations of major powers with smaller regional powers, the major powers often need to get other major powers – especially its allies- to agree with their plans. The failure of getting British approval restricted U.S. policies in 1964. This is a key concept that also has ramifications for 2003. In the 2003 Iraq crisis, U.S. would ask for Turkey to practically join the war, when even the closest ally of U.S., Britain, had some internal disagreements regarding the war. It was not even certain that Britain would join U.S. in the war as strongly as it eventually did. This would be noted in Turkey and would cause some concerns about accepting U.S. demands.

Ball also adopted the idea of taking the matter to the U.N. before the Cyprus government, and creating an international peacekeeping force on the island. Thus, taking the initiative in U.N. would take Makarios "off balance" and give advantage to U.S. To

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<sup>200</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation" (13 February 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 25.

<sup>201</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 344-347.

<sup>202</sup> Ball, Memoirs, 348.

gain Turkey's agreement to this plan, Ball promised İnönü that U.S. would safeguard the Turkish interests (including the Treaty of Guarantee) in the Security Council. Upon this assurance Turkey agreed to the "preemptive" appeal to the U.N. on 15 February. İnönü further asserted once again that Turkey would consult U.S. before taking an action.<sup>203</sup> Thus Ball's main goal in his second visit to Turkey, to "keep Turks at home" was accomplished.<sup>204</sup>

In a discussion of the Cyprus problem between U.S. and Britain on 13 February, British Prime Minister made it clear to Johnson that in case of a Turkish intervention, Britain would "call on it to stop at a certain line," and they "certainly would not fight a NATO ally." The Greeks had told Johnson that in case of a Turkish intervention, they would move their army to Cyprus as well. Thus, Johnson's main concern was to prevent the two armies from fighting each other. According to the British Prime Minister, Makarios "seemed to rely on a Soviet promise that it will keep the Turks from invading the island." When the British suggested that any Soviet action of that sort would "bring NATO into action," U.S. secretary of State Rusk responded that this was an extremely dangerous situation and "*before there would be a response to a Soviet action affecting the Soviet-Turkish border the question would be in the Security Council.[emphasis added]*"<sup>205</sup> This clearly illustrates U.S. reluctance to be drawn into a war with the Soviet Union.

The next day, with interesting coincidence, İnönü presented Ball some questions about similar issues to which he expected U.S.'s response. Some of these questions are very important since they illuminate the Turkish concerns about a unilateral intervention.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 213 originally from : Ball via Jones, Embtel London 3956 (15 February 1964): SDSNF, 1964-1966, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2080, NARA, part III, 2.

<sup>204</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 71.

<sup>205</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation" (13 February 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 26.

<sup>206</sup> Rusk, "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey" FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 29-30.



1. What will U.S. response be if Russians intervene?
2. If U.S. advises patience, what will be advice to all other parties concerned in order to all other parties concerned in order to maintain even temporary peace and security?
3. Will U.S. release Turkey's troops from NATO command to be available and ready?
4. In case nobody intervenes except Turks, may [Turkey] expect [an] attitude [of] benevolence and neutrality [from] U.S. Government?
5. [Turkey] wish[es] clear-cut indication as soon as possible [about] U.S.'s U.N. tactics and close cooperation...

Turkey was also concerned about what Britain would do in case the troubles on the island went on, and whether Britain was ready to use its right of intervention together with Turkey.<sup>207</sup>

U.S. responses to these questions were: that it would never give support to a resolution that would question the Treaty of Guarantee; and that U.S. saw no prospect of a Russian intervention, but assumed that "Western powers including U.S. would find [a] way [to] prevent [it]. U.S. also indicated that it: "noted other possibility of Soviet pressure on Turkey" in case of a unilateral Turkish intervention. Such an action, U.S. argued, would "raise greatest questions for NATO generally and underscore[d] the necessity of finding [an] answer [to the] Cyprus problem which would prevent that contingency."<sup>208</sup> Turkey probably got the wrong signals from this response : that U.S. was leaving the door open for a Turkish intervention and it would not strongly oppose a unilateral Turkish move; and that U.S. would support Turkey against an Unwanted Russian reaction.

The above correspondence is critical in our analysis of the Johnson Letter and the Cyprus policies of U.S. and Turkey in 1964. As it is obvious from the first question of

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<sup>207</sup> Rusk, "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey" FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 29-30.

<sup>208</sup> Rusk, "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey" (14 February 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 29-30.

Turkey regarding the Russian reaction to a Turkish intervention, the main concern of Turkey was not a war with Greece, but it was a Soviet intervention. Turkey was primarily concerned to safeguard U.S. support against this likelihood. The critical asset of Turkey against such a possibility, either to prevent it in the first case, or to respond to it properly, was the U.S. support against Russia. The U.S. response clearly shows that U.S. opposed a Turkish intervention, but by promising that the West would “find a way” to prevent it, it was reiterating its commitment rising from NATO membership. This may be the reason why Turkey felt confident to go through and implement its threat of military intervention in June 1964. This issue is very significant, because the Johnson letter of June 1964 would argue that “[Turkey’s] NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its NATO allies.”<sup>209</sup>

Ball was convinced that there was a “50/50” chance of Turkish intervention. He had also concluded that a U.N. peacekeeping force would not be able to stop the bloodshed. Because a U.N. force “couldn’t shoot a policeman, which was the heart of the matter.” Johnson was strongly against a unilateral Turkish intervention. He believed that in a situation like that a U.S. threat of cutting off the aid to Turkey would be enough to stop the Turks.<sup>210</sup> Meanwhile U.S. had not given up on the idea of joint military intervention of the guarantor powers. But, when, on February 18, Johnson wrote a letter to the British Prime Minister suggesting “combined operation” as the only way to avoid “the fearful consequences of a Greek-Turkish war,”<sup>211</sup> the British refused it.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> The full text of the letter at: Rusk, “Telegram from the department of State to the Embassy in Turkey” (5 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 107-110.

<sup>210</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 216.

<sup>211</sup> Rusk, “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom” (20 February 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 31-32.

<sup>212</sup> Brands, “America Enters the Cyprus Tangle, 1964,” 354.

## **6. U.N. in March 1964**

As it was coordinated between Turkey, U.S., and Britain, the British took the matter to the U.N. before the Cyprus government did so.<sup>213</sup> On 4 March, the Security Council passed a resolution calling for a U.N. peacekeeping force. The resolution did not safeguard the Turkish concerns at all, as Ball had promised to do. There was no mention to the Treaty of Guarantee in the resolution. U.S. had further promised Turkey to make a speech in the U.N. Security Council to “balance the general impression of a pro-Greek resolution,” but it did not fulfill this second promise either. The resolution was a clear long-term victory of Makarios, since U.N. force would not be able to stop the violence on the island until the 1974 Turkish intervention.<sup>214</sup> As we have expressed before, Ball knew that it would be so, since a U.N. force would not shoot the Greek Cypriot “police,” who were themselves perpetrating violence. But the question is, if U.S. knew this, and it did not at least until March 1964 favor such an option, and promised to the Turks to the contrary, what led to the change of policy?

To understand this, we must consider what other options were on the table. A NATO force option had been discarded from the beginning since it would require an invitation from Makarios. “A force drawn from NATO countries” had been tried, but Makarios had refused it. Khrushchev had declared his open opposition to the deployment of NATO troops to the island “under any pretext.”<sup>215</sup> Upon this Ball had proposed a force from Commonwealth and neutral Western countries, but this was again refused by Makarios. Since the previous three options had required the acceptance of Makarios, and they had all failed because of his rejection, Ball had come up with the idea of joint intervention by the guarantor powers, which would not require the acceptance of Makarios. But, this time the British had rejected it. There remained three options: a joint intervention of Greece and Turkey; a unilateral Turkish intervention; and a U.N. peacekeeping force. The U.S. was against a unilateral Turkish intervention from the start. It was very doubtful that Greece would accept a combined intervention since it

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<sup>213</sup> Greece was not informed about it because of the looming elections in Greece.

<sup>214</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 220.

<sup>215</sup> Andreas Papandreou, Democracy at Gunpoint: The Greek Front, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 131.

would probably lead to partition or double enosis. In addition to these, the U.S. was extremely reluctant to commit its troops for a peacekeeping operation. Thus, U.N. force option was adopted by U.S. But, still, adoption of a U.N. force could be done in a more balanced way by at least mentioning the Treaty of Guarantee, and this would not contradict the U.S. policy until that moment, because U.S. had always expressed the continuing validity of the treaty up until then. The U.S. clearly chose a pro-Greek policy in the U.N.

Yet, being aware of the previous developments, and the U.S. efforts to bring the Greek Cypriots to a compromise, it would be false to argue that U.S. was indeed “pro-Greek” all along. Rather, it seems that, failing to force the Greek Cypriots into a compromise, being aware of the more “responsible” leadership in Turkey, and realizing that the Greeks had strong support in the U.N. from the Third World as well as the Soviet bloc, U.S. chose a policy that had pro-Greek implications. This signaled to Turkey that its major ally was adopting policies that would hurt Turkey’s national interests. According to the Turkish Foreign Minister, Turkey had “listened to [U.S.] advice re[garding] exerting restraint and then accepting resolution, only to find itself in a steadily deteriorating situation.”<sup>216</sup> Turkish doubts regarding U.S. policies would increase as time passed, and Turkey would eventually conclude that it had to take the initiative and create a *fait-accompli* in order to bring a favorable change in the status.

One of the factors that contributed to the U.S. tilt towards Greece was the upcoming U.S. presidential elections. Even in mid-February, when the Greeks in Athens had marched protests against Johnson accusing him of being pro-Turkish, Johnson had clearly expressed to Ball that he did not think that this was a “good thing.” There was a large number of Greek American in U.S., and their vote would be important in the elections. Johnson even sent former President Truman to Greece for the funeral of King Paul in the hope of gaining some votes from the Greek Americans and “old-line democrats.”<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Hare, “telegram From the Embassy in Ankara to the Department of State” (10 March 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 50.

<sup>217</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 218-219, 221.

## 7. Third Threat of Intervention: 8 March 1964

The arrival of the U.N. peacekeeping troops was delayed because of some second thoughts among some countries about contributing to the force. During this delay, the violence on the island increased further. On 8 March, Greek Cypriots launched an attack on the Turkish Cypriots in Baf(Paphos), Lefkosa(Nicosia), and Girne(Kyrennia).<sup>218</sup> Turkey saw this as an indication of the Greek Cypriot intention to create a “fait accompli” on the island before the arrival of the U.N. force.<sup>219</sup> Turkey became increasingly concerned about the situation on the island. On 12 March İnönü convened the National Security Council and decided to send a memorandum to Makarios threatening unilateral intervention unless the attacks on the Turkish Cypriots stopped. Before sending the memorandum to Makarios, Turkey informed the U.S. ambassador in Turkey about the decision. Upon this Hare requested 24 hours delay before a decision in order to be able to consult with Washington. On 13 March Turkey sent the ultimatum to Makarios. The Turkish concern prompted U.S. to hasten the deployment of the U.N. force. Thus U.S. provided \$2 million and free airlift to the contributing countries for the deployment of their forces. U.S. secretary of State Dean Rusk called the contributing countries to accelerate the deployment of the peacekeeping force to Cyprus. <sup>220</sup> Also on 13 March, the U.N. Security Council passed another resolution which reaffirmed the resolution of 4 March 1964, called all the members to “refrain from action or threat of action likely to worsen the situation in the sovereign Republic of Cyprus.”<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 72 ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 222. (Nicolet mentions that most pro-Greek authors argue that Greek Cypriots were “provoked” by the “Turkish Cypriots” in order to cause a Turkish intervention. There are no actual proofs of a Turkish provocation, though. The only things cited by Nicolet as proof are “opinions” of the “new” U.S. ambassador to Cyprus. Nicolet also cites Komer’s opinion that Turkey “probably” saw this as a last opportunity for an intervention. That Turkey did not see it that way will be quite clear as we see İnönü’s comments after the arrival of the U.N. force.)

<sup>219</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 39 originally from : Nihat Erim, Bildigim ve Gordugum Gercekler Icinde Kibris, (Ankara: Ajans-Turk, 1975), 256-257.

<sup>220</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 39 ; Bölükbaşı, The Superpowers and the Third World, 72, 73 ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 73 ; Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 223.

<sup>221</sup> “Resolution 187,” Resolutions Adopted by the United Nations on the Cyprus Problem 1964-1968, (Nicosia: Republic of Cyprus, 1999), 7.

The first part of the U.N. force arrived in Cyprus on 14 March 1964. According to the Turkish government, the rapid deployment of the U.N. force was a result of the Turkish threat of intervention. It was considered as “a big diplomatic success” of the Turkish government. As the cabinet spokesman told the National Assembly, Turkey had “precluded a massacre” by hastening the deployment of the peacekeeping force. The violence on the island indeed subsided after the arrival of U.N. force.<sup>222</sup> The Turkish Government was probably right in claiming some part in the rapidization of the deployment process, but the argument that it was a “diplomatic success” seems to be a selling effort of the government who, unable to intervene unilaterally, wanted to show that it was delivering something to the public.

The way Turkey conceived the situation is again important. Turkey had again threatened to intervene, and again had gained something in return. According to İnönü, Turkey had achieved its goal of stopping the attacks on Turks “without the Turkish army suffering a single casualty.” Moreover, İnönü had doubts about the result of a military intervention. He considered the possibility of ending up in a war with Greece, and “given the Soviet threat, he could not afford a war with Greece or alienation of U.S.”<sup>223</sup>

### **C. BROADER TURKISH CONCERNS**

Turkey had two main priorities in the Cyprus dispute of 1964. It wanted to protect the well-being of the Turkish Cypriots on the island, and to prevent Cyprus from falling under the control of a hostile power. Yet, while considering actions to safeguard these priorities, Turkey was also keen to avoid alienating U.S. because of the need for NATO commitment in case of an unwanted Russian reaction.

The preservation of the well-being of the Turkish Cypriots was mainly a domestic concern arising from the public sensitivity towards the killing of the Turks on the island. The strong feelings of the public were also shared by the Turkish Armed Forces, who were keener than the government to take risky actions. The government was under

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<sup>222</sup> Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers and the Third World*, 73. (Bölükbaşı quotes the cabinet spokesman from Turkish daily newspaper Milliyet, 16 March 1964.)

<sup>223</sup> Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers and the Third World*, 74 originally from: Erim, *Bildigim ve Gordugum Gercekler Icinde Kibris*, 264.

intense domestic pressure to show that it was not “weak” and that it was able to protect the interests of Turkey as well as the Turkish Cypriots.

Turkey was also concerned that Cyprus ruled by a hostile power would be a threat to Turkey’s security. In case of enosis, Cyprus would fall completely under Greek rule, and with their further decreased proportion in the new “united” Greece, Turkish Cypriots would not have a strong say in the government, and they would be left to the mercy of Greeks with whom they had been fighting for years. Second, considered together with the Aegean islands, a Greek Cyprus would mean Turkey’s encirclement from the sea by the enemy. Turkey was also concerned about a communist take over of the island, which would create even more dangerous consequences for Turkey. The preservation of the effective participation of the Turkish Community in the Cyprus government as established by the constitution was also acting as a safeguard against such an outcome.

#### **D. FROM ENOSIS TO THE JOHNSON LETTER**

##### **1. The Evolving U.S. Position: From Slightly Pro-Turkish, to Strongly Pro-Greek**

As the events on Cyprus developed rapidly, U.S. diplomats had begun to engage in designing a long-term solution to the problem; which resulted in a more active diplomatic policy in March. Until January 1964, the solutions considered by the U.S. State department were based on the “cooperation between the two communities” in addition to some external help to safeguard the eventual status. Less than a month later, realizing the degree of animosity between Turkey and Greece, and concluding that it was not possible anymore for Turkey and Greece to cooperate, Gordon D. King from GTI (Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State) proposed to replace the tripartite Treaty of Guarantee with a Guarantee from Britain only. After this failed because of the British decision to disentangle itself from the Cyprus problem, it was proposed to insert a “NATO High Commissioner or Commission” as the external power.<sup>224</sup> Meanwhile, On 7 January, John Bowling from GTI had argued for partition, but, it was later concluded by INR(Bureau of

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<sup>224</sup> According to Nicolet, this would be the last “moderate” U.S. plan for a solution, and from this moment on, U.S. proposals would be “on a more extreme character.”

Intelligence and Research, Department of State) that partition was “impractical”, because it would bring economic and social hardship, and it would not be accepted by Greece.<sup>225</sup>

On 29 January, Dankwart A. Rustow from NEA (Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State) proposed a solution based on “exchanging the Turkish population with the Greek population of one or several islands off Turkey’s Aegean Coast.”<sup>226</sup> According to Rustow, this proposal was recognizing the true nature of the conflict as one “between the Greek and Turkish Nations,” rather than one between the Cypriot communities.<sup>227</sup> This argument seems to be the basis of American view, and was underlined by the following U.S. missions.<sup>228</sup> It seems that, by this time, U.S. had diagnosed the problem correctly.

The breaking point in U.S. policy came in March 1964. After the U.N. resolution on March 4, the Greeks seemed to be winning the struggle; therefore, Greece would not agree to the cession of an Aegean island. Hence, John Bowling argued, the exchange of population should be limited to Cyprus, in addition to the relocation of the Turkish Cypriots in Turkey. A union of Cyprus with Greece should be allowed. Turkey would be given two bases on Cyprus in exchange for enosis. One interesting point about this proposition was that, the same person who had proposed “partition” only three months

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<sup>225</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 226 (For the proposals mentioned in this paragraph Nicolet cites various State Department internal messages and working papers which we could not be able to verify: Wehmeyer, working paper: “treaty of Joint Sovereignty” (11 December 1963): Lot 67D412 Entry 5257, POL 22: Working Papers, box 3, NARA ; King to Liebesny(INR), Memorandum: “Notes on a Political Formula for Cyprus,” (9 January 1964): Lot 67D412 Entry 5257, POL 15 Government(Cabinet), box 2, NARA, 3 ; Neumann to Council chairman Walt W., Rostow, Memorandum: “The Cyprus Crisis” (30 January 1964): Lot 70D199, Entry 5041, Records of the Policy Planning Council (S?PC), 1963-64, Cyprus, box 251, NARA, 5-6 ; Cited in King to Liebesny, Memorandum: “ Notes on a Political Formula for Cyprus” (9 January 1964): Lot 67D412, Entry 5257, POL 15, Government (Cabinet), box 2, NARA, 1. ; George C. Denney, Jr., Deputy INR Director, to Rusk, Memorandum: “Feasibility of Partitioning Cyprus” (25 February 2004): Lot 67D412 Entry 5257, POL 22: Suggested Cyprus Solutions, box 4, NARA.)

<sup>226</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 226-227 originally from : Rustow, “A Solution For the Cyprus Problem” (29 January 1964): Lot 686D91, Entry 5256, NEA/GRK, Records Relating to Greece, 1964-66: POL Greece-Cyprus, 1964, box 6, NARA.

<sup>227</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 227 originally from : Rustow, “A Solution For the Cyprus problem” (29 January 1964): Lot 686D91, Entry 5256, NEA/GRK, Records Relating to Greece, 1964-66: POL Greece-Cyprus, 1964, box 6, NARA, 3.

<sup>228</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 227



ago proposed it.<sup>229</sup> One tends to think that the change in U.S. policy was a reaction of the changing circumstances after the U.N. resolution. But, one important issue that casts doubt on this thinking is, as we mentioned in the previous section, that U.S. could have prevented—as it had actually promised—the resolution from being as pro-Greek as it turned out to be, or at least, it could have balanced its effects by confirming the validity of the Treaty of Guarantee – again as it had promised Turkey to do. Yet, U.S. consciously chose not to. Therefore, my conclusion is that U.S. reached a decision to shift its policy away from supporting the Turkish position sometime before the U.N. meeting was finished.

After the U.N. resolution, the proposals increasingly started to ask for more and more concessions from Turkey. On 14 March, Robert W. Komer (Member of the National Security Council Staff), was convinced that: “[...] Enosis might just work[...]”. This gives the impression that some U.S. officials were more concerned with ending the crisis rather than solving it. Komer argued that, those Turkish Cypriots who decided to stay on the island would be better protected in a united Greece than an independent Cyprus. Moreover, enosis would safeguard the base rights of U.S. and Britain as well. The “trick” was, according to Komer, “to get [the] Turks to see all this, too.”<sup>230</sup> It is not certain why Komer thought that Turkish Cypriots, who had been subjected to serious violence despite making up one fifth of the island’s population, would be better off in a “united” Greece in which they would be relegated to a minority status. He was right that it would take a “trick” for Turkey to “see” that U.S. and British security concerns were being satisfied, and Turkey’s security concerns were in fact not important in the eyes of U.S.

One week later, John D. Jernegan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, argued that even territorial concession to Turkey

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<sup>229</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 227 originally from: Bowling to Renegan, memorandum: “Long Range Solution in Cyprus” (5 March 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2081, NARA.

<sup>230</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 227 originally from Komer to McG. Bundy, Message (14 March 1964): NSF, CF, Middle East, Cyprus, Vol. V, Cables 3/64, box 119, doc. 74, LBJ-Library.

would not be necessary, because “Turkish Cypriots would be better off under NATO-ally Greece.” Moreover, he added, due to the increasing relations of Makarios with the Soviet bloc, and his emerging “signs of hostility towards British bases”, enosis would “in any case” be preferred to an independent Cyprus. The only need of Turkey that Jernegan mentioned was “to save its pride.”<sup>231</sup>

U.S. had set out supporting the resolution of the problem by requesting the Greeks to compromise, but as they faced an unflinching Greek and Greek Cypriot stance that was also supported by the international community, and with the added concerns about the Greek-American votes in the upcoming elections, it ended up adopting a pro-Greek position.

There are a number of reasons why U.S. felt that it could pressure Turkey more than it could pressure Greece. The Truman doctrine had established close ties between Greece and U.S., but due to the strategic importance of Turkey, and the strong willingness of the Turkish officials to go along with U.S. policies had increased Turkish-American ties much more than the ties with Greece. The level of military aid to Turkey made the U.S. officials think Turkey would be less willing to harm its ties with U.S. than Greece. Also, the close and historical threat of the Soviet Union increased Turkey’s concerns regarding the Cold War, and constituted the primary security concern for Turkey. Harming its relations with U.S. would strengthen already existing doubts about the commitment of NATO to Turkey’s defense in case of a Soviet aggression.

## **2. The Papandreou-Makarios Talks: Collaboration Against Common Enemy**

Early in April 1964, Makarios visited Athens to discuss the Cyprus issue with the newly elected Greek Prime Minister, George Papandreou. In this visit they reached an important agreement that greatly affected the subsequent events in Cyprus. The main points of their agreement were : <sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, originally from: Jernegan to Hare, Letter (21 March 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 27 CYP, box 2090, NARA, esp. 3-4.

<sup>232</sup> Papandreou, Democracy at Gunpoint, 132.

1. A solution would be sought only through NATO. Both accepting the competence of NATO, and bipartite talks between Greece and Turkey could only prejudice Greek position.
2. The ultimate target was enosis.
3. Every effort should be made not to provoke the Turks.
4. Greece would come to the aid of Makarios if Turkey attacked.

It is clear that, while being a member of the same alliance, Greece would not hesitate to start a war with Turkey over Cyprus. These talks confirm the U.S. fear that a Turkish intervention would lead to a war between Greece and Turkey, yet they also show the equation was not only one sided : that U.S. should have also discouraged Greece from a war against Turkey.

### **3. The U.S. Final Proposal Evolves: Enosis, In Return for Some Form of Compensation to Turkey**

On 7 April, the new American ambassador to Cyprus, Taylor Belcher sent a telegram to the Department of State. In this telegram, Belcher proposed a solution on the following basis:<sup>233</sup>

1. Majority rule with proportional representation
2. Adequate safeguards for minorities
3. Cyprus to be tied to Greece either by enosis or in some “associated” status in which Greece would at minimum control foreign policy and defense, “perhaps” leaving other facets of government to Cypriots.

Belcher also outlined the advantages of enosis. He argued that enosis would:<sup>234</sup>

1. Tie Cyprus firmly to [the] West, thus eliminating security concerns of UK, Turkey, and [U.S.].
2. Reduce danger of further growth of Communism on [the] island

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<sup>233</sup> Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 58.

<sup>234</sup> Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 59-60.

3. End nuisance of Cypriot “neutralist” foreign policy maneuvering.
4. Remove constant irritant in Greek politics and [at the ] same time weaken Soviet ability [to] exploit [the] issue in Greece.
5. Effect set-back for Soviet(and UAR[United Arab republic]) policy in [the] area, which is adamantly opposed to enosis.
6. Give [U.S.] friendly government with which to negotiate satisfactory status for our communications facilities.

What’s interesting about this proposal is that, according to Belcher, “only through some such device could [Turkey] be convinced that [its] security interests [were] being preserved and safeguarded.” He added: “ [ I ] Do not see how independent Cyprus could continue to be “used” in one way or another as shuttlecock in Soviet-Western Cold War in the area.” He further claimed that “only as part of Greece and thereby included in NATO security system could [Turkish] fears be mitigated.”<sup>235</sup> This clearly shows his belief that Turkey and U.S. shared the same Cold War concerns with the same degree of importance. Belcher’s proposal and remarks clearly highlight what his basic assumptions about the end-state priorities of U.S. were: this was a Cold-War problem that needed to be dealt with in a way to produce maximum benefits to the allies against the communists, and all the NATO allies, including Turkey, would benefit most from such a result. The basic U.S. motive was to gain the upper hand against the Soviet bloc by removing the Cyprus problem in favor of the allies once and for all.

There are a number of other important points about this proposal:

*First* of all, his proposal was *exactly* the same as the Greek policy. There is absolutely no difference from what Makarios would suggest for a solution.

*Second*, unlike what Belcher claimed, the proposal would not satisfy the interests of either the Turkish Cypriots or Turkey. To the contrary it would increase the risks to both. In case of enosis, the Turkish community would have even a lesser proportion in the overall population, since, and then the total population would include those of Greeks

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<sup>235</sup> Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 58.

in Greece as well. Thus, they would be turned into a very tiny minority and would be left to the complete mercy of the Greeks with whom they had been fighting for so many years.

*Third*, “adequate safeguards”, as Belcher suggests, could have only a very tiny chance of being “adequate”, because, after enosis there would be no Treaty of Guarantee that would prevent Greek Cypriots from attacking the Turks. In case of a new inter-communal violence, they would be able to make a very strong case of it being an “internal problem.”

And, it is also important to remember that only three years after signing an international agreement, the Greeks (both the Greek Cypriots and the mainland Greeks) had changed their idea and attempted to unilaterally revoke those treaties despite the fact that there were two other guarantor powers which would safeguard them. In case of enosis, in the absence of any other guarantor powers, what would prevent the Greeks from abrogating those “adequate” guarantees”? Any sort of an international guarantee would not be effective because it is hard to imagine any country which would intervene militarily in Greece.

*Fourth*, it is also hard to imagine how Turkish fears could be “mitigated” by enosis. It was something Turkey had been trying to prevent since the eruption of the crisis. It is true that Turkey was concerned about the Soviet involvement in Cyprus. But, unlike what Belcher claims, enosis was not the “only” way of including Cyprus in NATO. An independent Cyprus could very well be included in NATO. If not independent Cyprus, double enosis would also result in the inclusion of Cyprus in NATO as well, since both Turkey and Greece were members of NATO. In short, it might be understandable that for some reasons the ambassador saw the enosis solution as the best for the U.S. interests, but his claim that it would also satisfy Turkish interests is clearly self-contradictory, at a minimum.

*Fifth*, it is also clear that the ambassador was probably aware of the risks for the Turkish community in case of enosis. His solution for that was: “assisted emigration of

Turks who are convinced they can no longer live with Greek Cypriots in Cyprus.”<sup>236</sup> He further recommended to the Department of State to “bear in mind how sensitive is Cypriot pride” and argued that Greeks “can win out eventually even if this means going to [the U.N.]”

*Sixth*, Belcher did not mention any disadvantages of enosis at all, other than that it would require “major selling effort with Turks.” The embassies in Athens and Ankara both sent telegrams the following day, in which they “reported similar conclusions: that either independence or enosis was the only likely solution to the Cyprus issue and that union with Greece would require political concessions to Turkey.”<sup>237</sup> Even Hare had concluded that Turks were “losing the battle unless [Turkey] intervened militarily.”<sup>238</sup> Thus, by 8 April, a general consensus in U.S. was reached over the eventual solution of the Cyprus problem: “*enosis, coupled with voluntary emigration, and some form of concession to Turkey.*[emphasis added]”<sup>239</sup> Also, Hare’s last comments suggest that U.S. should be aware of the inevitability of a Turkish military move. The reason why U.S. failed to take earlier precautions to prevent such an action was probably the general opinion in the U.S. policy makers, including Hare, that Turkish threats were merely a tactic of the Turkish government to gain leverage, and that a real intervention was not imminent. This was because U.S. had realized that the earlier Turkish threats were indeed so. As Turkey threatened to intervene, and failed to do so, the threats were losing their influence. The effects of the earlier interactions were preventing U.S. policy makers to realize the change in the Turkish mindset. This would also be the case in 2003, when U.S. policy makers would expect from Turkey similar, even stronger, cooperation in the Iraq war, due to their knowledge of Turkey’s voluntary cooperation in 1991 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War as well as in many other cases like Korea, Bosnia, and Afghanistan.

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<sup>236</sup> Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 59.

<sup>237</sup> First quote from : Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 59. Second quote from : Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State” (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 60 (footnote 6).

<sup>238</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228 originally from: Hare, Embtel Ankara 1315 (8 April 1964), SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2083, NARA.

<sup>239</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228.

On 10 April, Ball informed Johnson about this “unanimous position.”<sup>240</sup> The only other alternative that was “feasible” and “consistent with U.S. interests” was, according to the U.S. ambassador in London, “partition with the union of two parts to Greece and Turkey respectively,” which would later be called as “double enosis.”<sup>241</sup> If the ambassador was right, and double-enosis was also “consistent with U.S. interests,” which I think it was, then comes the question of why the U.S. always discarded that option? Double-enosis was not as impractical as some other proposals suggested by U.S.

There are two main reasons for U.S. reluctance to support partition or double-enosis: One is the fear of losing Greece from the alliance either through a communist take over or a withdrawal from NATO. U.S. did not have similar fears about Turkey. İnönü’s interview with the Time magazine, in which he argued that “[...]a new kind of world order will be established under new conditions, and in this world Turkey will find itself a place” does not seem to have any effect on the U.S. policy. İnönü had probably made this statement to balance the U.S. concerns about losing a NATO ally in terms of Greece. Yet, it seems to me that, this speech failed to produce the desired outcome. U.S. simply did not think that Turkey would switch sides and side with its traditional enemy throughout the history. The second issue underlying U.S. stance against partition was that, as I previously argued, U.S. did not see partition as a long-term viable solution. A third U.S. concern that can be added to the above two is the domestic concern of the administration for the upcoming elections and the Greek-American votes.

The Department of State finished preparing a memorandum about the possible solutions to the Cyprus problem on 24 April. In this memorandum, 4 main options were examined:<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228 originally from: Ball to Johnson, “Memorandum for the President – Items for Evening Reading” (10 April 1964): Lot 74D164, Entry 5049, President’s Evening Reading Reports, 1964-1974, box 1, NARA.

<sup>241</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228 originally from: Bruce, Embtel London 4931 (8 April 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP box 2083, NARA, part II, 2.

<sup>242</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228-229 originally from: Talbot to Ball, Memorandum: “Cyprus Solutions – Alternatives, Recommendations and Tactics” (*undated*): NSF, NSC Histories, Cyprus Crisis, Dec. 1963 - Dec. 1967, box 16, doc. 87b, LBJ-Library. (Although the report is undated, Nicolet asserts that the 87a document was issued on 24 April, and “various markings indicate[d] that the two documents were issued simultaneously.”)

Unitary state with minority guarantees

Double enosis

Enosis with a population exchange

Enosis with territorial compensation

The memorandum adopted the last option: *enosis, coupled with territorial compensation to Turkey*. Though the cession of Aegean islands was regarded unacceptable to Greece, the memorandum argued that a Turkish base in Cyprus, possibly in the Karpas Peninsula, should be acceptable to Greece both “politically and militarily.” This was regarded as an adequate compensation for Turkey since a base on Karpas could “command the approach to sensitive Turkish military areas.” An additional compensation that would make the plan even more acceptable to Turkey, according to the memorandum, was the cession of the Kastellorizon Island to Turkey. This was probably considered to be acceptable to Greece because of its relatively small size of merely four square miles.<sup>243</sup> U.S. seems to have realized that it needed to address Turkish security concerns more strongly.

#### **4. U.S.-Greece Talks**

Just two days after Belcher’s telegram, on 10 April 1964, U.S. ambassador in Greece, Henry R. Labouisse, met with the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou. In this meeting, Labouisse urged “moderation” to Papandreou since the events were “moving in Greek favor.” He urged him to restrain Makarios, since “in order [to] create conditions conducive to ultimate settlement it [was] essential that damage to Turkish prestige be held to minimum.” It is also very meaningful that Labouisse “pointed out that U.S. had made conscious effort following Cuban crisis to spare Khrushchev as much humiliation as possible.”<sup>244</sup> It is quite clear who would be in the position of Khrushchev in this case. This dialogue clearly shows that U.S. was adopting a pro-Greek stance and it was not only Bercher who had gone pro-Greek in the U.S. diplomatic establishment.

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<sup>243</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 229 originally from: Talbot to Ball, Memorandum: “Cyprus Solutions – Alternatives, Recommendations and Tactics” (*undated*): NSF, NSC Histories, Cyprus Crisis, Dec. 1963 - Dec. 1967, box 16, doc. 87b, LBJ-Library

<sup>244</sup> Labouisse, “Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State” (10 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 62.



During the same meeting, Papandreou told Labouisse that: “in order not [to] provoke Turks he would not push for enosis at this point, or even self-determination.” Instead of these, Papandreou “would press [for the] idea of “independence” which he felt was principle that no one could oppose.” It is important to note that Cyprus was already an independent country at the time. What Papandreou wanted was independence without the Treaty of Guarantee. He explained: “the new character of this independence would necessitate the abolishment of all recent treaties which had been proved unworkable.” Arguing that the Turkish Cypriots should be given the rights of a “minority,”<sup>245</sup> under the protection of an “international guarantee”, Papandreou further asserted that: “Self-determination and enosis would follow naturally since independent state could take any action it wished.”<sup>246</sup>

## **5. The U.S. in a Dilemma**

The major dilemma U.S. faced in the eventual solution of the Cyprus problem was, according to Ball, in case of a proposal that would “shock” Turkey, the Turks would “turn to [U.S.], and ask what [U.S. was] going to do,” and, Ball argued, this would create a “very difficult situation.”<sup>247</sup> The priority of the U.S. policy was still to prevent a unilateral Turkish intervention, since it could lead to a war with Greece. The inter-communal violence on the island was of only “secondary” importance to U.S., as long as it did not cause the relations between Greece and Turkey to further deteriorate. This was manifested with the Fulbright mission in May 1964, when J. William Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was sent on a “fact-finding mission” about the Cyprus problem to Turkey and Greece, and not Cyprus.<sup>248</sup> One major mistake of U.S. was to “treat Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus as states with long histories

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<sup>245</sup> Though he paints this aspect by declaring that they should be given the “full and complete rights of a minority,” what it amounts to is a proportional representation in which the Turkish Cypriots can not have a final say in any vital issue concerning the country.

<sup>246</sup> Labouisse, “Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State” (10 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 63.

<sup>247</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 230 originally from: Ball to Talbot, Telcon (5 May 1964): Ball Papers, box 3, doc. 97, LBJ-Library.

<sup>248</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 232, 233, 234 (Fulbright, after his mission, recommended “double-enosis”, but his proposition was not supported – p.234)

and military and diplomatic priorities based on regional concerns that may or may not be compatible with the global strategy of the United States.”<sup>249</sup>

#### **E. U.S. DOMESTIC CONCERNS: UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND THE GREEK LOBBY**

Though U.S. did not support any particular side in the conflict, its support would carry a lot of weight for the resolution of the conflict in any particular way. Therefore the conflicting parties continuously tried to pull U.S. to their side. These efforts were often unsuccessful, though they sometimes produced results. One successful attempt to affect U.S. policy in Cyprus was, as we saw earlier, the massive lobbying in the congress by the Greek Americans in 1954.

Presidential elections were to be held in U.S. in November 1964. Numerous polls predicted that it would be a close race. In 1964, there were about half a million Greek Americans in U.S., compared to a little more than a hundred thousand Turkish-Americans.<sup>250</sup> Most of the Greek Cypriots lived in big cities, and were much more organized than the Turkish Americans. By June 26, 1964, White House had received 2,598 letters from Greek-Americans concerning the Greeks in Turkey and Cyprus<sup>251</sup> while only two letters supporting the Turkish case arrived in White House, one from a Turkish American in Colorado, and one from İstanbul.<sup>252</sup>

According to Nicolet: “the only realistic solution the U.S. could imagine was favoring Greece, and the pending presidential election made a policy that was favorable to the large Greek-American community a necessity.”<sup>253</sup> Johnson had followed the Cyprus dispute very closely, and claiming that he was concerned about its impact on the Greek American voters, Stearns argues that “Rusk, a good soldier that he was, drafted the letter to İnönü that he had reason to believe Johnson wanted to send.”<sup>254</sup> Moreover, it is

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<sup>249</sup> Stearns, *Entangled Allies*, 16.

<sup>250</sup> Jacob M. Landau, *Johnson’s 1964 Letter to İnönü and Greek Lobbying of the White House* (Jerusalem : Hebrew University of Jerusalem [The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations]), 13, 15, 16.

<sup>251</sup> Landau, *Johnson’s 1964 Letter to İnönü and Greek Lobbying of the White House*), 12, 13.

<sup>252</sup> Landau, *Johnson’s 1964 Letter to İnönü and Greek Lobbying of the White House*), 18.

<sup>253</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 245.

<sup>254</sup> Stearns, *Entangled Allies*, 39.

also claimed that “foreign policy for Johnson was inextricably integrated into the process of domestic politics.”<sup>255</sup> This may be because of his political career a senator before he became President..

In my opinion, though not solely responsible, the domestic concerns of the U.S. administration may have played an important role in the shift of U.S. policy in Cyprus to being pro-Greek, resulting in the harsh tone of the Johnson letter

## **F. THE JOHNSON LETTER**

### **1. The Turkish Decision to Intervene**

Turkey was becoming increasingly concerned about the Cyprus problem. Things had started going from bad to worse. Especially after the U.N. resolution in March Turkey had started being increasingly isolated in its case about the eventual solution to the dispute. Metin Toker, the son-in-law of İnönü, summarized how The Turkish Government felt at the time: “we determined our policy in co-operation with the Americans. As a loyal ally of the United States, we informed Washington about our every action and intention... We seriously listened to advice of the Americans. When the Anglo-American plan of a NATO peace-keeping force was submitted to us, we accepted it though it had some points contrary to our policy. We patiently waited for attempts of George Ball in February 1964 although we were sure that his proposals would not be accepted by Makarios. Finally, we gave consent to taking the Cyprus problem to the United Nations after the United States promised that a good result would be achieved in the U.N. Although we had the right to intervene in Cyprus under the Cyprus treaties, we heeded warnings of Washington and did not intervene.”<sup>256</sup> The Turks felt that U.S. “demanded more and more concessions from Turkey each time Makarios rejected a new proposal.”<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Landau, Johnson’s 1964 Letter to İnönü and Greek Lobbying of the White House), 15 originally from: Philip Geyelin, Lyndon B. Johnson and the World (New York: Praeger, 1966), 13-14.

<sup>256</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 42 originally from : Metin Toker, “Turkiye Yol Agzinda”, Akis, 4 April 1964, 7.

<sup>257</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 42 originally from : Metin Toker, “İsmet Paşa ile 4 Buhranlı Yıl,” Milliyet, 19 February 1969, 5.

In April 1964, İnönü gave an interview to the *Time* magazine, in which he asserted that Turkey had done everything it could, to “preserve its alliance with the West,” while its allies were “competing with the enemies of the Western camp in destroying the alliance.” He complained about the “hands-off” policy U.S. after the arrival of the U.N. force and claimed that the presence of the U.N. force made it more difficult for Turkey to intervene.<sup>258</sup> He further warned that: “if our allies do not change their attitude, the Western alliance will break up and then a new kind of world order will be established under new conditions, and in this world Turkey will find itself a place.”<sup>259</sup> On 17 April, İnönü criticized U.S. for not pressuring the Greeks for violating international agreements and the constitution, and expressed his disappointment: “I had trusted in the leadership of America, who had responsibility within the Western alliance, I am suffering now as a result of this attitude.”<sup>260</sup> Moreover, Turkey thought that Greece had exploited the moderate approach of Turkey. On April 29, Turkish Foreign Minister Erkin told President Johnson: “our antagonist took advantage of our moderation and is seeking to inflict humiliation on us.” He further asserted that since there was the U.N. force on the island now, it was “not possible for [Turkey] to intervene anymore.”<sup>261</sup>

Meanwhile the violence on the island continued to increase, especially since the end of April. Both sides on the island were also taking hostages from the other side. In May 1964, Greek Cypriots killed 35 of the hostages.<sup>262</sup> The U.N. force was neither willing nor able to intervene to stop the Greek attacks on the Turkish Cypriots.<sup>263</sup> As the U.S. Ambassador in Cyprus asserted, the Greek Cypriots were increasing their resources and “Turkish position on the island [was] being steadily weakened.”<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Süha Bölükbaşı, “The Johnson Letter Revisited,” *Middle Easterns Studies* 29, no. 3 (1993): 516.

<sup>259</sup> Uslu, *The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003*, 43.

<sup>260</sup> Uslu, *The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003*, 43 originally from : Cumhuriyet, 17 April 1964, 1 and M.Sarica, *Kıbrıs Sorunu*, 67.

<sup>261</sup> R.W.Komer, “Memorandum for the Record,” (29 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 76.

<sup>262</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 237 ; Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers and the Third World*, 74 originally from: Cumhuriyet, 12-30 May 1964.

<sup>263</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 237.

<sup>264</sup> Belcher, “Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the department of State” (7 May 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 85.

The Greek Cypriots were militarizing rapidly. They had called up volunteer soldiers in February 1964, and on 8 April the Greek Cypriot cabinet legislated conscription. On 18 May 1964, the Greek Cypriots went so far as to announce that they would buy warplanes and heavy weapons.<sup>265</sup> On 1 June 1964, they asked for the conscription of 25,000 people.<sup>266</sup> These developments increased Turkey's concerns, and this time not only for the security and well-being of the Turkish Cypriots, but to the "strategic security for Turkey itself."<sup>267</sup>

It was much more difficult for Turkey to support the Turkish Cypriots, since they were both less in number, and were mostly surrounded by Greek Cypriot forces in isolated enclaves. According to the U.S. sources, by June 1964, there were 35,000 Greek Cypriots troops and only 10,000 Turkish Cypriot troops on the island. The Greek Cypriot forces were also better equipped than Turkish Cypriots.<sup>268</sup>

The U.S., on the other hand, was not considering the growing imbalance of power between the two communities on the island as the real problem. The main U.S. concern was the affect on NATO. So much that, it did not even want to stop Greece from shipping arms to Cyprus because "Makarios would certainly go ahead and obtain them from other non-NATO sources."<sup>269</sup>

On May 11 1964, Erkin asked Rusk whether U.S. would support Turkey in case of a Turkish intervention. Rusk replied that this was considered by U.S. as a "last resort"

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<sup>265</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 45

<sup>266</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 237 originally from: Franz, Der Zyperkonflikt, 17-18 and Kosut, Cyprus 1946-68, 22.

<sup>267</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 237 originally from: As asserted by a Turkish Foreign Office Official to Hare and reported by Hare in: Hare, Embtel Ankara 1603 (5 June 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2085, NARA, 1.

<sup>268</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 237-238 The number of troops originally from: The Director of Central Intelligence, Special NIE 29.3.-64: "The Cyprus Dispute," (19 June 1964): NSF, National Intelligence Estimates, "29.3 Cyprus," box 6, doc. 2, LBJ-Library, 12.

<sup>269</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 237 quotes originally from: Bowling to Jenegan, Memorandum: "Proposed NAC Action on Shipment of Arms to Cyprus," (25 June 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2085, NARA.

and only the President could answer that question.<sup>270</sup> This sentence is also a very important one that shows the importance of signaling. By asserting that a unilateral intervention was considered as a “last resort” U.S. was leaving an open door for Turkey to take this action. Turkey considered this as a “last resort” as well, one that would be necessary in case all other options failed to bring the desired result.

The following day, İnönü told Hare that since the persuasion effort failed to produce any result, there remained only two alternatives for Turkey: “either submit to Makarios or beat some sense into his head by force.” When reminded by Hare of a possible Greece response to a Turkish intervention and war between Greece and Turkey, İnönü replied that it would be up to Greece and further asserted that Turkey would be ready for it.<sup>271</sup> None of these mentions of a unilateral intervention seemed to convince U.S. officials about the imminence of such an action. Hare would even call İnönü’s remarks as “reformulation of standard theme.”<sup>272</sup> As we have mentioned before, as the number of Turkish threats of intervention increased, and as they continued to fail to take place, even though due to partial fulfillment of Turkish requests, U.S. concluded to regard them as merely diplomatic maneuvers to gain some leverage over the course of events. This was indeed so in the first threat of intervention, and probably in the second one as well, but U.S. policymakers failed to recognize that this threat was indeed a real one.

On 4 June 1964, Hare learned about a possible Turkish intervention on June 5 or June 6 and immediately went to see the Turkish Foreign Minister. Erkin criticized the U.S. for not being active on the Cyprus problem, and told him that the decision about an intervention would be made at 8:30 in a cabinet meeting that night. He told Hare that he expected U.S. support against Greece in establishing “double enosis,” or federation, and asserted that ideas like population exchange or cession of “some small island” to Turkey

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<sup>270</sup> Rusk, “Telegram From Secretary of State Rusk to the department of State” (11 May 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 89.

<sup>271</sup> Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the department of State” (12 May 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 91.

<sup>272</sup> Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the department of State” (12 May 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 92.

were “out of question.”<sup>273</sup> The Department of State replied to Hare by telling him to see İnönü immediately “calling out of cabinet meeting if necessary” and express the opposition of U.S. to Turkish intervention in Cyprus and “use all arguments in [his] arsenal to pull [Turks] back from any such decision and to insist upon consultation.”<sup>274</sup> The same night, Hare had a meeting with İnönü in which İnönü told Hare that Turkey was intending to occupy only a part of the island. Greece could do the same, and there could be the U.N. force between the two parts. After that, Turkey would be in a stronger position for the negotiations. When asked by İnönü whether U.S. would support Turkey or not, Hare asked for 24 hours of delay to reply.<sup>275</sup> In his telegram to the Department of State, Hare asked for “strongest and most forthcoming assurances and arguments possible” to stop a Turkish intervention.<sup>276</sup>

Meanwhile, U.S. efforts to achieve something “firm” from Athens to calm down the Turks achieved no success, and it was concluded that Greece would “react promptly in force” in case of a Turkish intervention.<sup>277</sup> Belcher warned that Greek Cypriots would “massacre thousands of Cypriots” before Turkish forces accomplished a landing.”<sup>278</sup>

## **2. Johnson’s Letter**

On 5 June 1964, President Johnson sent a letter to İnönü, “The Johnson letter,” as it would later called, was so shocking that George Ball would call it as “the diplomatic equivalent of an atom bomb,” and Stearns would call it: “ a startling specimen of diplomatic overkill. ”<sup>279</sup> When Rusk showed him a draft of the letter, Ball said: “I think

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<sup>273</sup> Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to Department of State” (4 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 103-104.

<sup>274</sup> Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to Department of State” (4 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 105 (footnote 2) originally from: Telegram 1285 to Ankara, June 4, 1:15 p.m.

<sup>275</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 240 originally from: Hare, Embtel Ankara 1599 (5 June 1964):SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2085, NARA, part 1, 2 ; Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the department of State” (5 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 106-107.

<sup>276</sup> Hare, “Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the department of State” (5 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 107.

<sup>277</sup> Labouisse, “Telegram from the Embassy In Greece to the department of State” (4 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 105, 106.

<sup>278</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 240 originally from: Belcher, Embtel Nicosia 1312 (5 June 1964):SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2085, NARA

<sup>279</sup> Stearns, Entangled Allies, 36 ; Ball, Memoirs, 350.

that may stop İnönü from invading, but I don't know how we'll ever get him down off the ceiling after that." Rusk simply responded by saying that would be Ball's problem.<sup>280</sup>

In this famous (or rather "notorious") letter, Johnson argued very strongly against a Turkish intervention in Cyprus.<sup>281</sup> *First*, Johnson criticized the Turkish decision as being contrary to what he had been promised: that U.S. would be "fully" consulted before such a decision. *Second*, Johnson argued that the right of taking unilateral action, as granted by the Treaty of Guarantee, was "not yet applicable" in this case, because Turkish action intended to achieve partition rather than reestablishing the constitution, and the treaty also required the consultation of Guarantor powers before a unilateral action. *Third*, Johnson emphasized the concerns about NATO unity and a possible Soviet involvement.

Assuring İnönü that a war with Greece was certain in case of a Turkish military action, Johnson asserted that Turkey and Greece should follow the example of Germany and France in burying their hostilities. The biggest disappointment to Turkey came in the last part of this paragraph: "I hope you will understand that your NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its NATO allies."

*Fourth*, Johnson reminded İnönü of the presence of the U.N. peacekeeping force and the U.N. mediator on the island, and warned against a strong reaction from the U.N. in case of a Turkish intervention. *Fifth*, Johnson asserted that U.S. did not approve the use of "any United States supplied military equipment" in a Turkish operation, since the 1947 Treaty between U.S. and Turkey required the U.S. approval for the use of such equipment "for purposes other than those for which such assistance was furnished." *Sixth*, Johnson warned İnönü that, a Turkish military action would result in the "slaughter of tens of thousands of Turkish Cypriots."

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<sup>280</sup> Ball, *Memoirs*, 350. (According to Ball, the letter was prepared by Secretary of State Dean Rusk with the help of Assistant Secretary of State Harlan Cleveland, and Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Joseph J Sisco)

<sup>281</sup> The full text of the letter at: Rusk, "Telegram from the department of State to the Embassy in Turkey" (5 June 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 107-110.



To avoid giving the impression that U.S. was favoring the Greeks against the Turks, Johnson also asserted that U.S. policy in Cyprus had “caused the liveliest resentment in Athens,” and declared that U.S. would not support “any solution of Cyprus which endangers the Turkish Cypriot community.” Finally, Johnson warned İnönü to see the bigger picture as the U.S. saw it: “These are issues which go far beyond the bilateral relations between Turkey and United States. They not only certainly will involve war between Turkey and Greece but could involve wider hostilities because of the unpredictable consequences which a unilateral intervention in Cyprus could produce.” Johnson asked İnönü to cancel the intervention and come to U.S. to discuss the situation.

The Johnson letter was an open “abandonment of Turkey by the United States in favor of Greece.”<sup>282</sup> İnönü would state to the cabinet: “our friends and our enemies have joined hands against us.”<sup>283</sup> This was an exaggeration, but it is important to show the perception and disappointment in Turkey regarding U.S. policies over Cyprus. The threat of not supporting Turkey in case of a Soviet attack against Turkey would “shake confidence in American commitments.”<sup>284</sup> Turkey suddenly found out that, while Turkey had stood firmly against the Soviets, all of the main NATO members had increased their relations with the Soviet Union. Turkey had also “completely neglected” the Third World. Thus, both the Soviet bloc, and the Third World countries had voted against Turkey in the U.N. And even some of the NATO members, as well as most of the Muslim states, joined the Greeks in their votes against Turkey.<sup>285</sup> The fact that even the Muslim states voted against Turkey in favor of non-Muslim Greeks would later, especially after the Johnson letter, cause Turkish Foreign Policy establishment to adopt a policy change regarding Middle Eastern countries.

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<sup>282</sup> Uslu, The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003, 48 ; Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, 132.

<sup>283</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, 132 originally from: *Aksam*, September 21, 1967.

<sup>284</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p.132.

<sup>285</sup> Vali, Bridge Across the Bosphorus, p.133.

Bülent Ecevit, who was the Secretary General of İnönü's Republican People Party (RPP) in 1964, would argue that the letter was a manifestation of the unreliability of U.S., and said:

We realized that our one-dimensional national security approach did not cover all contingencies. We began to discuss whether Turkey's membership in NATO contributed to Turkish security or actually increased dangers. We also realized that [NATO's commitment to our security] would be useless if our friends changed their minds [and did not stand up to their commitments]... We also realized how isolated we were. Because of the [international] isolation, we faced enormous difficulties [in convincing other states] that our cause was just...<sup>286</sup>

The Turkish Foreign Minister Feridun C. Erkin would say: "After this the relations between Turkey and the United States will never be the same."<sup>287</sup>

### **3. İnönü's Response**

İnönü agreed to Johnson's request and called off the operation. On 13 April, İnönü sent a letter to reply to Johnson's letter.<sup>288</sup> He started his letter by pointing out his disappointment to the tone of the letter: "your message, both in wording and content, [had] been disappointing for an ally like Turkey." In the remaining part, İnönü answered the arguments presented by Johnson against a Turkish intervention. İnönü denied that Turkey was intending to establish partition, since Turkish troops would be there only temporarily until an agreement was reached. Pointing out that Greece was already declaring that the Treaty of Guarantee was dead; İnönü explained the meaninglessness of a consultation with Greece.

The strongest point made by İnönü in his response was regarding the NATO unity and the Soviet threat. First of all, Cyprus was not a NATO country. Thus Turkey was not attacking a NATO country. Thus there was no need to remind Turkey that members in the alliance should not attack other members. Also, it was known for a fact by all the parties concerned with the conflict that, on numerous occasions, Turkey had proposed a

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<sup>286</sup> Süha Bölükbaşı, "The Johnson Letter Revisited," *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 3 (1993): 506.

<sup>287</sup> Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 242 originally from: Laipson, *Cyprus: A Quarter Century of U.S. Diplomacy*, 61.

<sup>288</sup> All the remaining of this section and the quotes from the Johnson letter are from: Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, 243-246.

joint intervention with Greece. Thus, if Greece chose to wage a war against Turkey in case of a Turkish intervention to the island, it was in fact Greece who was starting a war against a NATO ally. Therefore, it was the Greeks who needed to be warned against attacking a NATO country, not Turkey. Turkey would mount a military operation using its right given by the treaties which were signed by not only Cyprus, but Greece as well. Thus, İnönü stated that: “[i]f [...] Greece were to attack Turkey, we could in no way be held responsible of [for] the consequences of such an action.”

This is a strong argument indeed. It is very important, because it shows the contradiction of U.S. policy. If the main U.S. policy goal was to prevent a war between Greece and Turkey, The Johnson letter should have gone to Greece instead of Turkey. U.S. was acting on the assumption that Turkey was aiming to establish partition. This also shows the mistrust between U.S. and Turkey despite the two decades of alliance.

One other major issue both in Johnson’s letter and İnönü’s response was the issue of a possible Soviet involvement and U.S. reaction to this. Johnson had clearly threatened to stay away in case of a Russian attack on Turkey as a response to Turkey’s military intervention in Cyprus. This was completely the opposite of what Ball had told to İnönü only four months earlier. Ball had clearly stated that in case of a Soviet move against Turkey : “we profoundly respect our NATO obligations”.<sup>289</sup> İnönü further stated in his letter that questioning the “right or wrong of the situation of their fellow-member victim of a Soviet aggression,[...] the very foundations of the Alliance would be shaken and it would lose its meaning.”

## **G. CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the Cypriot crisis as it reemerged after the constitutional amendment proposals shows us that the disagreement between U.S. and Turkey over the Cyprus issue did not start in June 1964 in the form of the Johnson letter. The letter was a result of the developments on the island, as well as the international circumstances and the U.S. domestic political agenda.

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<sup>289</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 244 originally from: Ball via jOnes, Embtel London 3956(15 February 1964): SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2080, NARA, part II, 3.

U.S. and Turkey had close cooperation throughout the crisis up until March 1964 U.N. resolution. U.S. had become aware of the bilateral aspect of the problem as a Greek-Turkish struggle, rather than a dispute among the Cyprus communities, and was trying to keep a balanced position between two of its NATO allies, Greece and Turkey.

The two main pillars of U.S. policy were: to avoid the U.N., and to prevent Turkey from a unilateral intervention. U.S. was keen to avoid the issue to be exploited by the Russians as a means to damage the unity of NATO, or to gain leverage among the Greek Cypriots. Therefore U.S. wanted to avoid taking the matter to the U.N. Security Council. U.S. also feared that a unilateral Turkish move would have disastrous consequences. It would most certainly cause a war between Greece and Turkey, two NATO allies. Thus seriously damage the alliance. It could also provoke a Russian reaction, which could bring with it some serious consequences. Thus all U.S. attempts to resolve the problem intended to achieve both of the above priorities. But, as the events developed, U.S. saw that it would not be able to achieve both of these goals at the same time.

The politics of “alliance” were more important for U.S. in 1960s than it was in 2003. This was because of the Cold War doctrine of ‘containment,’ that aimed to prevent the Soviets from gaining new allies. The dual-headed system of two super powers also restricted U.S. actions and increased the importance of smaller allies for the super powers. In 2003, U.S. would be the only global hegemon, thus it did not have any concerns about losing any allies to the other side.

The principal aim of the Greeks was to internationalize the dispute as much as possible, and resolve the problem in U.N. They were confident that, if taken to the U.N., the dispute would be resolved in their favor once taken to the U.N. security Council. The Third World countries (mostly those who were members of the “non-aligned” movement), and the Soviet bloc, including some members of NATO were all supporting Greek Cypriot demands for “self-determination.” Unlike 1958, Turkish demands for separate self-determination of the Turkish Cypriots were not even supported by Britain, who had proposed the idea in the first place. Therefore, they steadfastly refused to accept

any U.S. proposal that avoided the U.N., or aimed at installing a multi-national peace-keeping force without resorting to U.N.

Up until mid-February 1964, the main U.S. policy makers were convinced that the Greeks would need to make compromises to resolve the problem. Turkish concerns over the well-beings of the Turkish Cypriots were recognized and confirmed. During Ball's trip to the area in February, U.S. tried nearly every alternative that could prevent taking the matter to U.N. as well as stop Turks from a unilateral action. All peacekeeping force alternatives required the approval of Greek Cypriots, which refused every one of them out of hand. Upon this U.S. suggested a joint military intervention of the three guarantor powers – a proposal that would satisfy Turkish concerns completely, because it would reemphasize Turkey's position as a guarantor power, as well as stop the bloodshed on the island, while the Greek Cypriots would certainly not like it because it would install Turkish forces on the island-, but, because of British reluctance to get involved, failed to implement this proposal either.

At the end of Ball's trip, in mid-February, U.S. realized that it would not be able to prevent the Greeks from taking the issue to the U.N. Turkey, on the other hand, was aware of its disadvantages in case the matter was taken to U.N. all along. But, with specific promises from U.S. to support the Turkish case in U.N., Turkey accepted to go along with the U.S. plan of "preemptive" U.N. cession.

Considering the outcome of the U.N. cession, there comes to mind two explanations regarding U.S. behavior: Either U.S. had already made up its mind to shift its policy to a more pro-Greek position and made binding promises to Turkey on purpose, in order to gain Turkey's approval for a "preemptive" U.N. cession, or U.S. indeed intended to keep those promises, but later changed its mind. My conclusion is that it was the latter, because, even if U.S. had not taken the matter to U.N., the Greek Cypriots would take it anyway. Thus, if U.S. had planned to abandon supporting Turkish interests all along, it could just wait for the Greeks to apply to the U.N., without making any promises to Turkey.

When the U.N. session started in March 1964, U.S. had two choices: either it would continue its historical Cyprus policy of keeping a balanced position as well as keeping its promises to Turkey, or it would withdraw its support for the Turkish cause. U.S. chose the latter because it was the option that satisfied most the two priorities of U.S. mentioned above. U.S. had always wanted to avoid U.N. involvement in the dispute, but, having tried all other options that it deemed feasible, a U.N. peacekeeping force seemed to be the only alternative left. U.S. was aware that it would not be effective in stopping the bloodshed, but it would at least hopefully decrease it, and more importantly, the presence of U.N. troops on the island would prevent a unilateral Turkish intervention. Moreover, U.N. forces would not include Russian, or communist bloc troops, therefore, the Soviet influence could be curbed. U.S. would also be able to counter Russian arguments that it was avoiding the U.N. Also, as in the 1954 U.N. meeting, domestic considerations of the U.S. administration may have pushed it into a pro-Greek stance. One other important reason for the shift in U.S. policy seems to be the U.S. failure to force the Greeks or Greek Cypriots to a compromise. Since the Soviet bloc and the Third World countries supported their cause, they were confident that they would eventually accomplish their goals, therefore, they would not accept any proposal that harmed their interests. Turkey, on the other hand, relied solely on U.S. support for its arguments, and it had very close relations with the U.S. The Turkish leaders had much more cold war concerns than their Greek counterparts.

Failing to force the Greek Cypriots into a compromise, being aware of the more “responsible” leadership in Turkey, and realizing that the Greeks had strong support in the U.N. from the Third World as well as the Soviet bloc, U.S. chose a policy that had pro-Greek implications. Also, the historical experience of earlier interactions with Turkey suggested that Turkey would be cooperative with U.S. This would be the case in 2003 as well, when U.S. would be trying to satisfy the Iraq Kurds’ concerns while at the same time trying to satisfy Turkey. The modern Turkish history of strong cooperation with U.S. also suggested that it would be the same in 2003.

The U.N. meeting would be the first in a series of developments that marked a general “tilt” against a possible Turkish military intervention. Turkey would increasingly

become isolated in its claims, and would be requested to make more compromises as time passed. Most importantly, Turkey would begin to feel that it was being abandoned by U.S., for the sake of its historical enemy, Greece. Yet, the disappointment in U.S. policies would reach the climax only after the Johnson letter. Until then, Turkey would continue to demand more U.S. involvement in the Cyprus dispute. This had two reasons: One, Turkey still thought that U.S. considered Turkey as an “ideal ally” and taking into account Turkey’s role in the Cold War, it would not act against Turkish interests. The other reason is that: any compromise to the Greeks in the Cyprus dispute, while it would be too hard to defend against the sensitive public opinion, would be easier to justify if it was openly requested by the United States.

The Johnson letter of June 1964 was a reaction to a Turkish threat of unilateral military intervention in Cyprus. Turkey had threatened to intervene on three previous occasions, and after all three of them, it had gained something in return. All three were in response to increased violence against the Turkish Cypriots on the island. The first one convinced the other two guarantor powers into a peacekeeping operation. The second one convinced U.S. to commit to a peacekeeping force, though U.S. later backed down from this commitment. The third one speeded up the deployment of peacekeeping forces to the island. Yet, as the number of Turkish threats increased, and they failed to take place, both their effectiveness on the island to stop the violence as well as their diplomatic benefits would decrease. Yet, Turkey failed to recognize this up until June 1964, because all the previous Turkish threats would have resulted in some form of political gain to the Turkish government, which exaggerated these gains, while the Turkish gains were merely figurative changes of policy implementations on the part of the international community, rather than complete reversal of policies. The first threat of military intervention had probably created an illusion in the Turkish government that it would continue to be effective.. In June 1964, as Turkey realized that its threats had begun to lose weight, it concluded that it would need to actually do something in order to bring a change in the situation . Turkey would find itself in a dilemma: either it would take military action, and take the risks that it would bring, or it would face a defeat against its historical adversary,

end up with an increased security threat to its mainland from its south, and leave the fate of its brethren to the mercy of its adversaries.

Turkey had two priorities in the Cyprus dispute: to protect the Turkish Cypriots and preserve their constitutional status in Cyprus, and to prevent Cyprus from falling under hostile domination. U.S., on the other hand, always strived to prevent an unwanted Turkish action that would bring Greece and Turkey into a war, and jeopardize the fate of the alliance. Considering the wider ramifications of a Turkish intervention, U.S. deemed the continuing killing of Turkish Cypriots temporarily negligible. The long-term solution of the problem would require the removal of the Turkish Cypriots altogether from the island, or their complete subjugation to the Greek government. When considered together with the domestic concerns of the U.S. administration over the looming elections and the role of Greek-American votes, and the concerns about a potential Greek withdrawal from NATO in case of an unwelcome solution to the Cyprus dispute, U.S. decided to stop the Turkish intervention with a stern letter. Yet, this “Johnson Letter” turned out to be much sterner than it needed to be and gave a substantial damage to the Turkish-American relations.

In the following chapter, which is the conclusion chapter of the thesis, we will explain the roots of disagreement in 1964 in a more systematic way, and strive to determine the commonalities in 2003. To do this, we will first list the factors that led to disagreement in 1964, later recount briefly the key events of the 2003 crisis starting from the first requests of U.S. from Turkey up until the March 2003 vote of the Turkish parliament, and finally analyze the 2003 crisis through the lessons of 1964.



## **IV. CONCLUSIONS**

### **A. THE FACTORS LEADING TO DISAGREEMENT IN 64**

Starting with the Truman plan and continuing with Turkey's NATO membership, Turkey and the U.S. formed strong relations. Though there were moments when U.S.-Turkish relations showed signs of potential trouble, Turkey continued to be a staunch ally of the U.S., and the ties between the two countries continued to be strong. The underlying factor in this alliance was, as we mentioned in the first chapter, the "mutuality of interests" in greater cooperation. Yet, the 1964 Johnson letter was a very strong blow to these ties. For the first time, the two countries failed to agree on an issue vital to one of them. The analysis of the 1964 Cyprus Crisis through the developments in Cyprus, as well as the historical perspective of U.S.-Turkey relations, and the evolving U.S. policies regarding the Cyprus dispute revealed the following points as the main reasons for U.S. Turkey disagreement:

#### **1. The Dynamics in the Relations**

The U.S. was a global power with global motives, concerns, and considerations. Turkey was a regional partner, though an important one, with its own regional concerns and priorities. The dynamics in the relations between a global power and a smaller partner included different perspectives, motives, and expectations as well as different strategic concerns.

Both countries were allies in the struggle against communism. Both Turkey and the U.S. considered Russia as the principal threat to their security. Thus, the basis of the U.S.-Turkey relations was security oriented: cooperation against a common enemy. Turkey fully cooperated with the U.S. against Russia, and even in other areas that it did not in fact deem necessary to its own interests. As long as this struggle went on, the U.S. and Turkey had similar perspectives. The 1964 Crisis presented Turkey with a regional security threat outside the scope of the traditional Cold War dynamics, and even contradictory to it in some aspects. Turkey was confronted with a threat from one of its NATO allies, Greece, and a non-aligned country, Cyprus. In addition to the security concerns, this situation also had strong domestic ramifications in Turkey. Moreover, the

struggle was one of national prestige and honor. Therefore, a defeat in this struggle would not only be an increased security threat in the south of Turkey, but also a blow to the national pride that the Turks value so high. Thus, Turkey would prioritize its regional security concerns over the global threats it faced. This did not mean that Turkey would completely ignore the global ramifications of its actions, though. To be able to deal with the regional threat in a way that would not jeopardize its ties with its allies, and to secure its global-power-ally's support in the larger scale of threats were also high priorities. But Turkey could hardly ignore its concerns over Cyprus for the sake of alliance solidarity. That's why Turkey continuously threatened to intervene unilaterally, while it tried not to alienate the U.S. with such a move. The U.S., on the other hand, continuously looked at the issue from the Cold-War perspective, while Turkey was occupied with the bilateral aspect of the problem vis-à-vis Greece and the Greek Cypriots. The U.S. would treat Turkey and Greece "as components of a strategic equation rather than as states with long histories and military and diplomatic priorities based on regional concerns that may or may not be compatible with the global strategy of the United States."<sup>290</sup>

The 1964 Cyprus Crisis presented Turkey with a new and different threat to its security. This threat was, unlike the Soviet threat, not shared by the United States. Yet, Turkey was still aware of the ramifications for the Cold War. The crisis could cause a war between Greece and Turkey, two NATO members. This could substantially damage the alliance unity as well as completely disrupt the southern flank of NATO. It even had a potential to trigger a nuclear stalemate, due to Russian support for the Greek Cypriots and their unknown reaction to a Turkish intervention. The U.S., not having the same strategic concerns as Turkey over the Cyprus dispute, expected Turkey to prioritize its global struggle over its regional security concerns, while Turkey expected the U.S. to support it in the regional dispute.

Another issue that created different expectations in Turkey than in the U.S. was the humanitarian aspect of the problem. As a champion of freedom and liberal values, the U.S. was expected to be sympathetic to the "sufferings" of the Turkish Cypriots in the

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<sup>290</sup> Stearns, *Entangled Allies*, 16.

hands of the Greek Cypriots. The U.S. was indeed aware of the unpleasant aspects of the inter-communal violence. Yet, in the context of the strategic ramifications of the dispute and the potentially dangerous possibilities, this aspect of the dispute was not on the U.S. priority list.

The motives of both countries were similar in principle, but different in details. Both wanted to protect their security, yet, the main motive of the U.S. would be to take the necessary steps that would fare best in the war on communism; while the main Turkish motive would be to safeguard its regional security while trying to secure global-power support to prevent its regional security concerns from causing a global backlash.

## **2. Unaligned Goals**

The two countries had different strategic interests in the dispute. The main U.S. interests were: to prevent the Cyprus issue from disrupting the southern flank of NATO, to prevent Soviet access to and influence over Cyprus, to avoid alienating either Greece or Turkey by taking sides, to achieve a long-term, stable solution to the dispute, to ensure NATO access to the island, and to safeguard the continuous availability of the U.S. communications facilities on the island. Though some of the U.S. actions do suggest that a long-term solution was not indeed emphasized by the U.S., rather than solving the problem somehow, the U.S. indeed wanted to prevent this issue from being continuously exploited by the Soviets. The main Turkish interests, on the other hand, were: to prevent of the fall of Cyprus under hostile rule; to stop the inter-communal violence on the island, which was taking Turkish Cypriot lives on a daily basis; and to solve the dispute in way that would not hurt national pride.

In the eyes of the U.S. a Cyprus under Greek rule was better than an independent, non-aligned Cyprus. To the U.S., the former meant that Cyprus would be a NATO territory under the rule of a NATO ally, Greece; while the latter meant potential communist takeover of the island, or danger to the fate of British bases and U.S. communications facilities on the island. To Turkey, enosis would mean the fall of Cyprus, a large island in the Mediterranean only 40 miles south of Anatolia, under enemy rule. The historical animosity between Greeks and Turks had reemerged, and as the two continued to struggle over Cyprus, it was daily reemphasized.

### **3. Domestic Concerns**

Both the U.S. and Turkey were susceptible to domestic pressure regarding the Cyprus dispute. The Turkish public was extremely sensitive to the developments on Cyprus; the daily news of inter-communal violence especially most often triggered sensitive emotions in the public. Most analysts confirm that Turkish Cypriots were the primary victims in the inter-communal violence in the conflict. The way the general public in Turkey conceived the situation was that their compatriots were being killed daily by Greek Cypriots, and the Turkish government, as well as the international community, was merely watching the events from a distance. This public perception, as well as the governmental crisis in Turkey, often resulted in a strong influence on the governments in Turkey to avoid being seen as “weak.” They felt the need to show the electorate that they were not making unnecessary compromises and were taking every necessary action to protect the well being of Turkish Cypriots. This increased interest of the public, and the domestic pressure on the government regarding a foreign policy issue was a new phenomenon in Turkey that had not taken place until the Cyprus Crisis erupted and turned into a Greek-Turkish struggle.

A second aspect of the domestic pressure on the Turkish Government came from the armed forces, which were often not pleased with the conciliatory approaches of the government regarding the Cyprus dispute, and favored more active policies, including military intervention. This pressure on the government, especially considering that there had been a military coup in Turkey in 1960, was at least as strong as the pressure from the public opinion. This was clearly vindicated in various instances by the remarks of Turkish or American diplomats throughout the crisis.

One other major aspect of the domestic concerns of Turkey that had foreign policy implications in the Cyprus dispute was the issue of “national honor.” In addition to being a matter of security concern as well as humanitarian feelings about the well-being of Turkish Cypriots, due to the historical context of Greek Turkish conflicts, the Cyprus dispute was a matter of national prestige for the Turkish public as a whole, both in Turkey and in Cyprus. The fact that the U.S. recognized this aspect of the dispute is clear from its references to the need for “saving Turkish pride” in the pro-Greek proposals it

suggested. Yet, the U.S. seems to have forgotten, or neglected, this in June 1964, when it wrote the Johnson letter. The U.S. “made the mistake of taking for granted that national prestige was secondary to concerns about the NATO cohesion” in Greece and Turkey.<sup>291</sup>

The domestic concerns of the U.S. regarding the Cyprus dispute arose from its Greek-American electorate, which could play an important, though not decisive, role in the elections. It would be wrong to attribute the Cyprus policy of the U.S. to domestic concerns, but it would be equally wrong to completely ignore it. There were times when the U.S. adopted pro-Turkish positions, despite the presence of Greek-Americans. But, during election times, U.S. policies have indeed been “tilted” towards Greece and the Greek Cypriots versus Turks and the Turkish Cypriots. One example of this is the massive lobbying in the congress by the Greek-Americans in 1954, which resulted in the U.S. abstaining from the vote in the U.N. Security Council, adopting a pro-Greek stance unlike the previous practice of vetoing such resolutions. The change of U.S. policy after the elections clearly suggests that this was affected by domestic concerns. There was a similar situation in 1964. The presidential election that would be held in November was expected to be a close race. It is concluded by a number of authors on the topic of U.S.-Turkish relations that the unexpectedly harsh tone and content of the Johnson letter was a result of the domestic concerns of the U.S. administration arising from the looming elections.<sup>292</sup>

One critical aspect of domestic pressure on both countries was that it could have an unexpectedly strong effect on the foreign policy decisions of both countries at certain periods. When there was political crisis in Turkey or a looming election was present, this would prompt the government to be less compromising in foreign policy issues, especially over those of close concern to the general public. The U.S. officials, also, were affected by election concerns more when the election was looming, particularly from the ethnic lobbies present in the U.S.

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<sup>291</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 233.

<sup>292</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 245 ; Stearns, Entangled Allies, 39.

#### 4. International Circumstances

International circumstances also caused changes in U.S. policy and led to a disagreement between the U.S. and Turkey. In June 1958, the U.S. was favoring a solution of granting Turkey some bases on the island in exchange for self-determination, but when the Middle East crisis broke up in July, Turkey's position was strengthened and U.S. policy changed in favor of Turkey. The U.S. then tried to convince the Greeks that Turkey had interests on the island that could not be ignored, and to soften the Greek position "without causing the Turks to run out."<sup>293</sup> The same year, when the issue was taken to the U.N., Turkey was the winning side.

After March 1964, it was clear that the Greeks were gaining the upper hand. The U.S. apparently concluded that Turkey was bound to lose the struggle over Cyprus both militarily on the island as well as internationally.<sup>294</sup> Belcher's argument of April 7 that Greece "can win out eventually even if this means going to [the U.N.];"<sup>295</sup> Hare's comment of April 8 that Turkey was "losing the battle unless [it] intervened militarily;" and Komer's statement of 6 June 1964 that the Department of State believed "...the Greeks [were] going to win anyway"<sup>296</sup> all confirm this supposition. Thus, in 1964 - unlike 1958- international opinion was against Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. The resulting U.S. policy took a pro-Greek position by supporting a form of enosis. The U.S. seemed to surprisingly underestimate the negative implications of this position on Turkey. Most policymakers in the U.S. even argued that this proposition would satisfy Turkish interests, as well. We have been unable to find any U.S. officials who mention the negative impact of this approach on Turkish-American relations. Moreover, though

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<sup>293</sup> Dulles, "Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State," FRUS, 1958-1960, X, pt.1, 695-696. ; Nicolet, 126.

<sup>294</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 228 originally from: Hare, Embtel Ankara 1315 (8 April 1964), SDSNF, 1964-66, POL 23-8 CYP, box 2083, NARA.

<sup>295</sup> Belcher, "Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State" (7 April 1964), FRUS, 1964-1968, XVI, 59-60.

<sup>296</sup> Nicolet, United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 245 originally from: Komer to McG. Bundy, Memorandum (6 June 1964): NSF, NSC Histories, Cyprus Crisis, Dec. 1963-Dec. 1967, box 16, doc. 10d, LBJ-Library.

some U.S. officials did mention that the only option for Turkey to reverse the tide that was developing against its interests in Cyprus was to take military action, this possibility was not addressed at all.

In June 1964, international opinion was overwhelmingly against a unilateral Turkish intervention of Cyprus. The presence of a U.N. peacekeeping force on the island, though it failed to “create” peace, let alone “keep” it, was making it very hard for Turkey to justify a military intervention with the Treaty of Guarantee. Moreover, both the Soviet bloc countries, as well as the Third World largely supported the Greek-Cypriot argument for “self-determination”. Thus, if the U.S. supported Turkish intentions, it would also risk being branded by the communist bloc as preventing the “self-determination” of Greek Cypriots. Considering the U.S. concerns over a Greek withdrawal from NATO as well as a communist takeover in Cyprus or increased Soviet influence on the island, such an action was most undesirable. Moreover, unlike Turkey, the NATO allies of Turkey did not see Greek rule over Cyprus as undesirable, to the contrary, it was seen as in the interests of the alliance.

Also, the international repercussions of a unilateral Turkish intervention were not desirable at all. In case Turkey intervened militarily and the Cyprus dispute was resolved in a way advantageous to Turkey, this would send a “wrong” message to the international community that “using force might just work.” The U.S. probably wanted to avoid setting a precedent that could be imitated by others. But the Greek Cypriots had already set the precedent in 1956. Their armed resistance had, along with the changing international circumstances, forced the British to withdraw from the island.

## **5. Signaling Failures and Effects of Earlier Interactions**

One other important factor that caused disagreement between the U.S. and Turkey in the 1964 Cyprus crisis was the failure of both countries to send the right signals to the other side, and the erroneous interpretation of earlier interactions which thus created false expectations.

Both countries sent the wrong signals to the other during the crisis. The U.S. response in February 1964 to Turkey’s inquiry regarding a U.S. reaction to a possible Turkish intervention created a false expectation on the part of Turkey that the U.S. would

not strongly oppose a unilateral Turkish intervention and would support Turkey against a Russian reaction. Also, the Turkish earlier threats of intervention caused the U.S. to believe that Turkey's main goal was not to reestablish the constitutional rights of Turkish Cypriots, protect the rights of its co-nationals, or address its own security concerns, but to create facts on the ground by invading the island and later force the international community and the Greeks to accept partition. Thus, Turkey's increasing number of threats served to alienate the U.S. rather than increase U.S. support for the Turkish cause.

By June 1964, Turkey had threatened to intervene three times and failed to implement them because some of its demands were met after these threats. This created an impression on the Turkish officials that they could continue to gain concessions through threats. Yet, as the number of threats increased, their credibility started to decrease. The initial threats were indeed fake ones, which Turkey did not really intend to follow through. The U.S. would conclude that Turkey was indeed bluffing, and it would be less eager to respond to Turkey's demands as time went on. Therefore Turkey would gain nothing by merely threatening, and would feel the need to actually do something to reverse the tide. Thus, U.S. would fail to read the signals correctly that Turkey was this time intending to implement its threat of unilateral military intervention in June 1964.

I have also concluded that foreign policy formation in both in the U.S. and Turkey is influenced by three main factors: the strategic concerns about the issue, domestic concerns, and the international circumstances. Each of the three have a potential to outweigh the other two concerns at different moments. Though the strategic concerns most often tend to favor Turkey in the eyes of the U.S., they are not immune to change. A decrease in the U.S. view about Turkey's importance as a regional partner is likely to cause more policy decisions disadvantageous to Turkish interests. These will in turn provoke disagreement with Turkey and further damage to Turkish-American relations. The domestic concerns of Turkey may not be compatible with the interests of the U.S., and, despite the strong will of the Turkish governments to cooperate with the U.S., it is hard to ignore the public opinion in an increasingly democratic country like Turkey, where –as the November 2002 elections have shown- no party is immune to the danger of falling below the 10% threshold to enter the parliament. The U.S. domestic concerns have



a potential to affect U.S.-Turkish relations, but only on issues over which there exists a strong anti-Turkish lobby in the U.S. The international circumstances, on the other hand, may increase or decrease the need or cost of U.S. support to Turkey. Changes in the strategic environment will probably change the views of both the U.S. and Turkey vis-à-vis each other.

## **B. THE KEY EVENTS LEADING TO THE 2003 CRISIS**

The talks –and later negotiations- between Turkey and U.S. regarding Turkey’s role in an upcoming U.S. invasion in Iraq started in January 2002 and resulted in the refusal of the Turkish Parliament to allow U.S. troops to open a second front through Turkish soil on 1 March 2003.

Starting in mid-January 2002, U.S. expressed its intention to the Turkish officials of removing Saddam Hussein, and asked for Turkey’s cooperation. Though Turkish officials never pronounced a clear “no,” they always expressed their objection to a war and their reservations regarding the consequences of such an action. They also often emphasized the need for international legitimacy.<sup>297</sup>

The solid U.S. request for Turkey’s cooperation came on 14-17 July 2002, when Paul Wolfowitz and Marc Grossman made a visit to Turkey.<sup>298</sup> Turkey’s response was that Turkey would act in accordance with alliance relations. Though Turkish officials reemphasized the potential unfavorable consequences of such an action, Wolfowitz left Turkey with higher hopes that an eventual cooperation was on the way.<sup>299</sup> There was probably a difference between what Turks meant with “alliance relations” and what Wolfowitz thought it meant.

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<sup>297</sup> Fikret Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları (Ankara: Unit Yayıncılık, 2003), 34-37, 58.

<sup>298</sup> *Milliyet* (16 July 2002)

<sup>299</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 147-149.

After this visit, Turkey adopted a two-track policy: on the one hand, it would try to prevent the war from happening in the first place, while on the other hand, it would try to make the most of –or, more realistically, reduce as much as possible the cost of- an inevitable U.S. invasion.<sup>300</sup>

There was also a serious governmental crisis in Turkey. Very soon after Wolfowitz left, the decision for an early election on November 3 was made. In the meantime, the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the General Staff determined the Turkish priorities regarding a war in Iraq. Turkey's so-called "red lines" were formulated as follows: 1)Formation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq; 2)The fall of Mosul and Kirkuk under Kurdish rule; 3)Creation of a loose, decentralized government structure in Iraq, which could lead to the independence of Kurds or one in which Turcoman of Iraq are not seen as a key segment of the Iraqi population; 4)International intervention without legal justification; 5)Getting involved in an intervention without reaching an acceptable agreement with the U.S.<sup>301</sup> The primary goal of Turkey was stated as "to prevent unfavorable formations in Northern Iraq".<sup>302</sup>

The first mention to Turkey of a "northern option" was made during Uğur Ziyal's visit to U.S. on 26 August 2002. <sup>303</sup> Ziyal met with all the high ranking U.S. officials, including Cheney, Rice, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Grossman. The U.S. made seven demands on Turkey, including permission to use Turkish soil for a ground attack on Iraq. Turkey responded positively to some of the short-term requests, such as permission for U-2 over-flights, and permission for U.S. Special Operation Teams to pass into northern

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<sup>300</sup> Bill Park, "Strategic Location and Political Dislocation: Turkey, The United States, And Northern Iraq," Middle East Review of International Affairs(MERIA) Journal, 7, no.2 (June 2003) <<http://meria.idc.ac.il>>

<sup>301</sup> Later on one more item would be added to this "red-lines" list : "the control of natural resources in Iraq by the central government."

<sup>302</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, 166, 167. (The author cites presents the original "secret" document that contains these policy decisions. Later these "red-lines" all became public by the statements of the Turkish government officials)

<sup>303</sup> Ziyal was, and still is, the leading bureaucrat in the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Iraq through Turkey, and stated that it would consider the other requests. The acceptance of the short-term requests raised U.S. hopes about the eventual acceptance of the other demands.<sup>304</sup>

On 26 September, the Turkish Foreign Ministry submitted a policy document regarding Iraq and the U.S. demands about a “Northern Option.” The report recommended against granting permission to U.S. to station troops in Turkey “unless very dramatic changes in the circumstances took place.”<sup>305</sup>

The exact details of U.S. demands from Turkey took shape in October. The main U.S. demands submitted to Turkey in October 2002 were:<sup>306</sup>

1. The stationing of 80.000 U.S. troops, and 250 fighter planes in Turkey.
2. The use of six main and eight supplementary airfields, two main, three supplementary ports in Turkey
3. Permission to use Turkish lands in an operation against Iraq

The evaluation of U.S. demands by the Turkish Foreign Ministry on 15 October concluded that Turkey should limit its support to the Iraq operation to allowing the use of the İncirlik base and permitting over-flights and special operations. The document stated the following:<sup>307</sup>

These requests are much more than the previously expressed levels of an Army Corps, four airfields, two ports, and 233 planes. This is even much more than U.S. demanded from Turkey in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War.[...] It will station on Turkish soil the greatest number of foreign forces since the establishment of the republic. [...] The increased U.S. presence in Turkey might become permanent.

In a sense, the U.S. wants a “blank check,” which will relegate Turkey to the status of Kuwait. [...] U.S. has not indicated to Turkey the details of the post-Saddam Iraq it envisaged. [...] Turkey’s ability to adopt its own

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<sup>304</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 176-179.

<sup>305</sup>“Siyasi Karar Hazırlığı,” (26 September 2002) in Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, EK-4 ; Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 177-182.

<sup>306</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 185.

<sup>307</sup> “ABD’nin Yeni Talepleri,” (15 September 2002) in : Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, EK-5.

policies and its regional weight will decrease. [...] It may harm the relations with the EU. [...] It might not be decisive in preventing the establishment of a Kurdish State. [...] It might create increased anti-Americanism in Turkey, and prompt terrorist actions. [...] It is also important to keep friendly relations with U.S.; therefore, Turkey should give active support to U.S. policies in Iraq as much as the capabilities permit.

It might cause reactions, “even events” from the public, and damage the economy.

It may have unfavorable regional consequences for Turkey to act, like Kuwait, as the base for an invasion force that would likely stay in Iraq for 4-5 years.

In case an invasion became inevitable, Turkey’s role was to be minimum. Turkey’s attention should be given to the aftermath of the operation, and try to be effective in the new developments.<sup>308</sup>

The relations with U.S., depression in the economy, the Cyprus dispute, and possible tensions with the EU made it very difficult to reject the U.S. demands outright. A comprehensive demand packet was to be submitted to U.S., and with insistence on emphasizing the acceptance of it by the U.S. Congress.<sup>309</sup>

When General Tommy Franks, as CinCCentCom, visited Turkey on 21-23 October,<sup>310</sup> Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit claimed that U.S. would not be able to “carry out this operation [against Iraq]” and advised U.S. to “abandon the idea.”<sup>311</sup>

The Turkish elections on 3 November 2002 resulted in the victory of the AKP (Justice and Development Party). A new Turkish government was formed, with Abdullah Gül as Prime Minister. Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader of AKP, had been unable to enter parliament –and therefore could not become Prime Minister- due to a legal restriction he

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<sup>308</sup> There seems to be vagueness here. The question of how exactly Turkey could both have minimum role in an operation, and also be effective in the developments aftermath lingers without a definite answer.

<sup>309</sup> What is meant here is, probably, avoiding a U.S. failure of implementing these due to a lack of an approval from the U.S. Congress.

<sup>310</sup> Barak A. Salmoni, “Strategic Partners or Estranged Allies: Turkey, the United States, and Operation Iraqi Freedom,” *Strategic Insights*, Volume II, Issue 7 (July 2003), available at: <<http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/july03/middleEast.asp>> (2 October 2004)

<sup>311</sup> Ian Fisher, “Turkey, in the Middle, Grows More Worried Every Day About a U.S. Attack on Iraq.” New York Times (22 October 2002)

faced. The newly elected and inexperienced party leaders and Ministers found themselves confronted with three major foreign policy issues: “Turkey’s troubled candidacy for membership in the European Union, a deadline in February for a Cyprus settlement, and the looming war in Iraq”<sup>312</sup>

Wolfowitz and Grossman made another visit to Turkey on 3 December. They met with Gül and Erdoğan, who accepted U.S. requests to start reconnaissance and construction of new facilities in Turkish bases and airports.<sup>313</sup> In the meantime, polls in Turkey showed that more than 83% of the population opposed Turkey’s involvement in the war in any way.<sup>314</sup> On 10 December 2002, Erdoğan visited U.S. and met with President Bush. Even though he was not even a Member of Parliament, he was treated like a Prime Minister. This, together with the extraordinary treatment that Ziyal had received previously, showed the importance U.S. gave to Turkey’s support. Yet, it was reported in the U.S. Press that “Bush was unable [...] to persuade [...] Erdoğan to commit to providing the U.S. military the access it wants.” Erdoğan had “held his ground,” though Bush was “angry” and “frustrated” as U.S. officials reported.<sup>315</sup>

Though most NATO members objected the war, the U.S. had higher expectations from Turkey. Bush had been convinced that “as a long standing ally through NATO, Turkey [had] a greater obligation to provide military help [...]”<sup>316</sup> In early January 2003, Paul Wolfowitz sent a “blunt” letter to Turkish Prime Minister Gül, spelling out the U.S.

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<sup>312</sup> Karl Wick, “U.S. Suffers From Bad Timing In Request for Turkey’s Help,” The Washington Post (9 January 2003)

<sup>313</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savasları, 194-195.

<sup>314</sup> Salmoni, “Strategic Partners or Estranged Allies: Turkey, the United States, and Operation Iraqi Freedom(2 October 2004) originally from : Jonathan Gorvett, “Confronting Iraq/Turkey; Under U.S. pressure, Ankara weighs action in Iraq,” The Boston Globe (8December 2002)

<sup>315</sup> Paul Richter, “U.S. Plans for Full Turkey Access Lose Ground : A Top Official Refuses To Commit Extensive Military Support Amid Signs That Bush’s Bid To Speed Islamic Nation’s Entry Into EU Is Failing,” Los Angeles Times (12 December 2002).

<sup>316</sup> Paul Richter, “U.S. plans for Full Turkey Access Lose Ground : A top official refuses to commit extensive military support amid signs that Bush’s bid to speed Islamic nation’s entry into EU is failing,” Los Angeles Times (12 December 2002)

support for Turkey for over forty years. Gül responded “just as bluntly” spelling out Turkey’s support for U.S. in the same period.<sup>317</sup>

On 20 January, U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Myers visited Turkey, and met with his counterpart Özkök. In this meeting Özkök stated that U.S. demands needed to be decreased. The troop level should be in “thousands,” Turkish forces should enter northern Iraq, and “international legitimacy” should be obtained.<sup>318</sup> Erdoğan complained about the unsatisfactory level of U.S. aid offers.<sup>319</sup>

On 23 January Turkey convened a Middle East summit which called on Saddam to implement the U.N. resolutions “fully.”<sup>320</sup> It bore no result, but merely gave the Turkish government some extra time. The Turkish National Security Council convened on 31 January, and recommended the government to “take the necessary steps” to facilitate the preparations in case of an inevitable operation, in line of the Constitution.<sup>321</sup> This requirement for constitutional legitimacy is significant, because according to the Turkish Constitution, allowing the U.S. to stage an assault on Iraq from Turkish soil would require international legitimacy. It would be wrong to dismiss these concerns simply as an excuse, because Turkey has always been legalistic in terms of international relations. Even in 1964, Turkish officials were very careful to follow the procedures of an intervention as described in the Treaty of Guarantee.

Gül still believed there was hope to prevent the war. On 3 February, he arranged a meeting with Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramazan, which resulted in failure. Gül finally convinced himself that war was inevitable. On 6 February, Turkey permitted the

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<sup>317</sup> Leyla Boulton and Judy Dempsey, “Turkey wants to limit U.S. Force’s size,” Financial Times (20 January 2003)

<sup>318</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 207-208.

<sup>319</sup> Salmoni, “Strategic Partners or Estranged Allies: Turkey, the United States, and Operation Iraqi Freedom(2 October 2004).

<sup>320</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 209.

<sup>321</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 209, 212.(The Constitution binding refers to the need for “international legitimacy” for such an action.)

U.S. to upgrade the ports and airports, with a parliament bill that was opposed by 53 AKP deputies.<sup>322</sup> U.S. hopes increased.<sup>323</sup>

Meanwhile U.S.-Turkish negotiations regarding an agreement on the “Northern Option” and the Turkish role continued very slowly, each side proving to be tough negotiators. One major disagreement was over the U.S. request to place the Turkish troops in the operation under U.S. command, against which Turkey reacted very strongly. Early in February, U.S. Presidential envoy Zalmay Khalilzad stated that Turkish troops in Iraq would be “under the command of a U.S.-led coalition.”<sup>324</sup> Erdoğan would dismiss this statement as “humiliating” and “insulting.”<sup>325</sup> The U.S. later backed down from this request.

The negotiations were progressing very slowly. Turkey told U.S. that the invoice would be brought to the parliament on 18 February “if an agreement is reached.”<sup>326</sup> The negotiations took place on three tracks: economic, military, and political. The military negotiations had been mostly concluded: Turkish troops would operate with close coordination with U.S. troops and they would be free to engage in military conflict with the PKK terrorists.<sup>327</sup> The political aspect of the negotiations, which included the status of Kirkuk and Mosul, and the future of the Turcomans, had not been concluded. The U.S. offer on the financial aid of \$4-15 billion was also seen as unsatisfactory.<sup>328</sup> In the mean time, both U.S. and Turkish press mentioned a wide range of numbers regarding the requested and proposed level of economic aid. Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış, and Economics Minister Ali Babacan visited U.S. to conclude the negotiations on the amount of economic aid U.S. would provide to compensate for Turkey’s economic losses after a

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<sup>322</sup> Murat Yetkin, Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2004), 149.

<sup>323</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, 217, 218.

<sup>324</sup> John Anderson, “Legal Haggles Snag Deployment to Turkey,” The Washington Post (9 February 2003)

<sup>325</sup> John Anderson, “Party Discipline Won Out in Turkey’s Vote on U.S. Request,” The Washington Post (13 February 2003)

<sup>326</sup> Yetkin, Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu, 147

<sup>327</sup> “Memorandum of Understanding,” Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savaşları, EK-7.

<sup>328</sup> Yetkin, Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu, 151. (I have not been able to verify it, but it seems like the \$4-15 billion meant: \$4 billion in grants, \$15 billion as credits.)

war against Iraq. They met U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, with whom they reached to an understanding on \$2billion in grants, and \$4 billion in credits. The next day, President Bush accused them of “horse-trading,” but confirmed the validity of “whatever Powell said.” Yet, when Yakiş and Babacan returned Turkey, they found out that Marisa Lino, the chief U.S. negotiator, would “act as if those instructions never existed.” This probably created suspicions in Turkey regarding the implementations of the agreements. On 19 February, Erdoğan stated that Turkey would need a Congressional approval, since a verbal promise would not be “enough.”<sup>329</sup> Another thing that may have created these doubts was the general opinion among the Turkish officials as well as the public that U.S. failed to keep its promises to Turkey after the 1991 Gulf war. One important issue creating suspicion in Turkey was the impression that the U.S. was favoring the Kurdish groups in northern Iraq over Turkey. Zalmay Khalilzad was acting like he was protecting the interests of those groups against Turkey.<sup>330</sup>

On 18 February 2003, since the negotiations had not been concluded, Turkey postponed the vote of the invoice. Suspicions about U.S. motives grew even stronger on 25 February, when Turkish military officials stated that U.S. was insisting on delivering anti-aircraft weapons to the Iraqi Kurds. Considering that Iraq practically lacked any air force capability, this action created suspicion that U.S. was trying to arm the Iraqi Kurds against Turkey. On 26 February, this issue became the headline in the popular daily newspaper *Milliyet*. The government was considering putting the invoice to vote on that same day. Though the government was “not satisfied with the agreement, but due to pressure, pressure from U.S., it [had] decided to forward it.”<sup>331</sup> Yet, after this newspaper headline, worried about a failure of passing the invoice, or maybe more worried about

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<sup>329</sup> Yetkin, *Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu*, 151-159.

<sup>330</sup> This is both my impression, and my understanding of the writings in : Bila, *Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara’da Irak Savasları*, 219 ; This suspicion is further mentioned in Yetkin, *Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu*, 139, 151, 174, 177.

<sup>331</sup> Salmoni, “Strategic Partners or Estranged Allies: Turkey, the United States, and Operation Iraqi Freedom(2 October 2004) originally from : Dexter Filkins, "Turkish Cabinet Endorses U.S. Proposal on Troops," New York Times (25 February 2003)



having to claim the sole responsibility for it as the government since the military had raised objections, the AKP leaders decided to delay the invoice to after NSC meeting on 28 February.<sup>332</sup>

On 28 February, the NSC convened. But, unlike what AKP leaders expected, it did not issue a recommendation statement regarding the invoice for the Iraq war. The invoice was voted on in the parliament on 1 March. The result was: 264 in favor, 250 against, 19 abstentions. Though it had achieved majority, the vote had failed to reach the overall majority, which was necessary for it to pass. It failed with four votes.

### **C. WHAT 1964 COULD HAVE TAUGHT ABOUT 2003**

#### **1. The Dynamics in the Relations**

Both in 2003 and in 1964 the dynamics in U.S. Turkish relations were mainly same. The Cold War was over, but the threat of terrorism had replaced the threat from communism. Turkey and U.S. were again allies in this war. The U.S. was still the global power, even more so as its major adversary, the Soviet Union, had collapsed, leaving U.S. as the global hegemon, and Turkey was an important regional partner. In 1964 U.S. had expected from Turkey to prioritize global security concerns arising from the Cold War over those of its regional security concerns, and, as we pointed out, Turkey had not done so. In 2003, the global war on terror had replaced the Cold War dynamics. Turkey was seen by U.S. as an important ally in the global war against terror, and the Iraq war was declared by U.S. as a part of this global struggle for security. Turkey had cooperated strongly in the war against terror, especially in Afghanistan, but when it came to Iraq, Turkey had its own security concerns about the consequences of the war.

In 2003 Turkey had two main concerns about a war against Iraq. First, Turkey was worried about the U.S. intervention in Iraq to increase the legal status of northern Iraq to more autonomy first, and later to independence. This increased status, coupled with the spoils of oil revenues in the region, could prompt this Kurdish entity to have undesirable influence on the Kurdish population in Turkey. Therefore, Turkey wanted strong assurances from U.S. that it would prevent this from happening. The repeated

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<sup>332</sup> Bila, Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, 227, 228, 230 ; Yetkin, Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oykusu, 166.

statements of U.S. officials declaring that Iraq would be preserved as a unitary country and that no Kurdish state would be established failed to convince the Turkish officials, especially after some U.S. actions –like distributing anti-aircraft weapons to the Iraqi Kurds- that created suspicion. Second, the increased autonomy or chaos in the northern Iraq was believed to increase the power of the PKK terrorists who were hiding in northern Iraq. A failure of U.S. could turn the region into a safe haven for terrorists. Turkey wanted to use this war as an opportunity to eradicate these terrorists. Due to these concerns, Turkey wanted to enter northern Iraq with its own troops and wanted a free hand to deal with them. These two issues were the heart of political and military track of the negotiations between U.S. and Turkey.

The failure to address these concerns satisfactorily during the negotiations led to disagreement. The U.S. was indeed aware of Turkey's regional concerns --mostly those regarding the future of Northern Iraq-- and it did accept Turkey's demands regarding Turkish command of Turkish troops, though after intense negotiations that created suspicion and distrust among the Turkish officials. It also accepted Turkey's freedom to fight the PKK terrorists, but failed to assure Turkey of its intentions regarding the future of northern Iraq. This issue was more important than the economic concerns of the Turkish officials, and a strong agreement with the U.S. on these concerns would have made it a lot easier for the Turkish parliament to pass the invoice.

Another aspect of the dynamics in the relations relevant in both 2003 and 1964 was that Turkey regarded U.S. as the “far away” partner who “comes and goes” to the region, while Turkey was bound to stay there facing the security risks from the threats that U.S. considered as allies. Therefore, though the Turkish concerns for global security concerns and relations with U.S. were very important as well, the regional security concerns, as well as the political ramifications in the region would be of primary importance to the Turkish officials.

## **2. Unaligned Goals**

As in 1964, the U.S. and Turkey had different –even conflicting – goals in a war against Iraq. The main goal of U.S. was to topple the Saddam regime, and establish a pro-western, preferably democratic, government. To achieve this goal it would want to use all

the support it could muster from the regional powers and global allies. The future of the Iraqi Kurds, as long as they stayed pro-U.S., was not of primary concern to U.S. Turkey, on the other hand was preoccupied with the prevention of the establishment of a Kurdish state, or even increased autonomy to the Kurdish areas. The main threats for the U.S. were the Baath loyalists and the Islamic Fundamentalist terrorist groups in Iraq. Neither the Iraqi Kurds, nor the Kurdish terrorists, were of principal threat to the U.S. forces, while both of them were considered as threats by the Turkish forces.

Thus, when U.S. tried to secure the support of the Iraqi Kurds to the operation in Iraq while at the same time it was negotiating with the Turkish officials for their support, the contradictions inevitably surfaced. U.S. was trying to gain the support of both Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds at the same time. Though U.S. saw both of these as allies, the two did not consider each other as allies. It is also important to note here that U.S. would treat Turkey- a very important country in a very strategic location with a history of over 5 decades of strong relations and cooperation with U.S.- and the relatively small group of Iraqi Kurds with virtually same importance. This increased importance of the Kurdish groups arose from the fact that they were Iraqis, and that they were the only Iraqi group that supported a U.S. invasion. This was very similar to the situation in 1964, when U.S. would see both Greece and Turkey as its allies due to their membership in NATO, and expect the two countries to disregard their differences in favor of alliance solidarity and the global security concerns. As we have underlined in the relevant sections, this failed to take place in 1964, as it would do the same in 2003, and U.S. would feel the need to choose one of its allies. This should also have been remembered by the Turkish officials, that U.S. could change its position from a pro-Turkish one and shift away to the support of other allies against Turkish interests. As U.S. shifted to a pro-Greek policy in 1964, in the face of failure of progress in the Turkish side, U.S. would abandon its efforts to “ally the mutual fears and distrust of both sides”<sup>333</sup> and choose to go along with the only

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<sup>333</sup> John Anderson, “Party Discipline Won Out in Turkey’s Vote on U.S. Request,” The Washington Post (13 February 2003)

support of Iraqi Kurds in 2003. As a Turkish analyst has rightly put it : “the big problem is the lack of trust between the Americans and the Turks, despite the fact that we have been allies since 1946.”<sup>334</sup>

### **3. Domestic Concerns**

Just as in 1964, domestic concerns would also have significant influence over foreign policy decisions, and contribute to disagreement between U.S. and Turkey. First of all, U.S. should have known better before the November 3 elections that, in light of the overwhelming opposition from the public, the Turkish government of Ecevit would in no way give the support U.S. requested. The looming elections would prevent any government to take such an unpopular decision. U.S. did recognize this, though a little late, and delayed the negotiations to after the elections. The new government of AKP after the elections seemed to be a strong and unitary party with the power of taking unpopular decisions. But, the true nature of this party, as Islamically affiliated and in the process of proving itself to the Turkish public- as in a kind of a “testing” period- as well as to the state institutions, and the deep divide among the party members, would prevent this party to take a strong position for the war. Moreover, the sizable number of more fundamentalist Islamists among the party members, who were opposed to the U.S. war for ideological reasons, created a challenge for the party leadership, who was not very enthusiastic about the war itself, either. Just as in 1964, the Turkish government would strive not to look “weak” to the Turkish public, as well as to its own party members. It had to prove that it was strong enough to protect the Turkish interests. Thus any compromise over the vital Turkish interests would be seen as “evidence of weakness.”

A second aspect of the domestic concerns of the government would, as in 1964, arise from the issue of national pride and honor. The cartoons in the American media depicting the Turks as greedy belly dancers and the like, and the reference by Bush to the negotiations about the economic aid packet as “horse-trading” were insults to the Turkish pride and honor. To the surprise of many Americans, this issue has been claimed by many Turks as one of the main reasons for the failure of the invoice in the parliament.

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<sup>334</sup> Karl Wick, “U.S. Suffers From Bad Timing In Request for Turkey’s Help,” The Washington Post (9 January 2003) Quoted from: Mensur Akgun, an analyst at the Turkish economic and Social Studies Foundation.

This may be an overexaggeration, never the less, U.S. should have known better. If nothing else, the experience in 1964 should have emphasized the role of emotional politics on Turkey.

#### **4. International Circumstances**

The role of international circumstances in the 2003 crisis was also a contribution to disagreement between U.S. and Turkey, though this time they worked against U.S. interests, contrary to 1964, when the overwhelming support of the international community to the Greek Cypriots had worked against Turkish interests. The lack of support for the U.S. invasion from both its NATO member allies as well as its allies in the region, “bolstered Ankara’s resistance ton U.S. pressure,”<sup>335</sup> as well as it increased Turkey’s hopes that the invasion could somehow be prevented.

Moreover, the lack of a second U.N. resolution that would provide the necessary legitimacy for a U.S. invasion would put the Turkish government in a situation to ignore the constitutional bindings in order to grant the U.S. demands. Even in 1964, when Turkey threatened to intervene in Cyprus, it would always try to justify the intervention in terms of the Treaty of Guarantee. Considered together with the background of the Turkish President in 2003 as the head of the Constitutional Court, this created additional concerns for Turkey that U.S. should have been aware of.

#### **5. Signaling Failures and Effects of Earlier Interactions**

The effects of signaling failures and wrong expectations due to previous experiences in 2003 were even greater than in 1964. Both countries sent wrong signals to the other side or interpreted other side’s signals wrongly in 2003. One good example is Turkey’s granting permission for the U.S. construction teams to renovate the Turkish bases. Though Turkey explicitly stated that the granting of this permission did not in any way mean the acceptance of permitting U.S. troops to use Turkish soil for a northern front, U.S. interpreted this action as a sign that the other U.S. demands would be accepted as well. Turkish officials did not want to alienate U.S., therefore the U.S. demands were not refused outright, but major “concerns” about the possible consequences were

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<sup>335</sup> Bill Park, “Strategic Location and Political Dislocation: Turkey, The United States, And Northern Iraq,” Middle East Review of International Affairs(MERIA) Journal, 7, no.2 (June 2003) <<http://meria.idc.ac.il>>

expressed continuously and U.S. was often advised to “abandon” war plans. Moreover, some Turkish officials, including Prime Minister Gül, for a long time believed that war was not inevitable, therefore continued to strive to prevent it. All these failed to convince U.S. as Bülent Aliriza put early in January 2003 that “Turks really mean[t] what they say: They [didn’t] want this war; they [didn’t] want to participate in this war. They seem[ed] determined to run out the clock so that it [became] too late to get involved.”<sup>336</sup>

The earlier experience of cooperation between the two countries during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War also served as another trouble spot. The 1991 Gulf war was remembered very differently by Turkey and U.S. The main memory of 1991 in U.S. about the Turkish American relations was the strong and willing cooperation of Turkey in the war. This created high expectations among the U.S. officials that Turkey would again give even more support to U.S. in 2003. On the other hand, most Turkish officials, including the public, remembered the 1991 war as one in which Turkey had supported U.S. wholeheartedly, but ended up paying a very high cost. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf war gave a strong blow to the weak Turkish economy and U.S. promises to compensate for Turkey’s economic losses in the war were not fulfilled. The refugee crisis and the increasing terrorist threat in Turkish borders after 1991 further strengthened the negative image of the Turkish cooperation in the Gulf War. Just as in 1964, earlier interactions were affecting Turkey and U.S. completely differently. In 1964 the three Turkish threats of intervention before 1964, and the resulting concessions from the international community –including U.S.- had further strengthened Turkey’s belief that it could gain concessions through threats. The failure of the implementation of these threats, even though they were due to the granted concessions, decreased their credibility in U.S. which then regarded the real signs of an imminent Turkish intervention as merely a bluff to gain more concessions.

Another effect of earlier interactions that was present both in 1964 and 2003 was the overexaggeration of Turkey’s unilateral capabilities in the international context. In 1964, some Turkish officials would over exaggerate the concessions from the

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<sup>336</sup> Richard Boudreaux, “Turkey Balks at Aiding U.S. Campaign,” Los Angeles Times (10 January 2003).

international community to Turkey's threats of intervention. In 2003, the strong pressure from U.S. on Turkey prompted some Turkish officials –especially from the government– to conclude that the U.S. could not launch an attack without Turkey's support, or that Turkey could somehow prevent the war. It was true that Turkey's cooperation was important for U.S. And this importance was obvious from the insistent requests from Washington. It would most probably shorten the war, and decrease the number of U.S. casualties. It must also be remembered that, even U.S. officials expected a strong resistance in Iraq, and that the war was not expected to be won as easily as it turned out to be. But still, it was wrong to assume that U.S. could not wage a war over Iraq without Turkey's cooperation, and as it turned out to be, U.S. would be able to risk going for it without sing Turkish soil.

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